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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS IN THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

by

© LORNE EDWIN JAQUES

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studes and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall, 1986

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS IN THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

submitted by LORNE EDWIN JAQUES in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of the Arts.

Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses upon the organizational qualities that are necessary to the effective implementation of the community development process. A group of individuals whose primary objective is to effect change in their conditions must also recognize that they have internal organizational needs that require their energy and attention as well. A systems theory context helps to demonstrate the relationships between the organization and its environment. Systems theory also helps relate the process orientation of community development to the dynamics present in an organization.

This aspect of community development is then illustrated in a case study of an inter-agency organization in Red Deer Alberta. The case study examines the nature of the organization across ten factors: communication, identity, leadership, cohesion, uniqueness and meaning, decision-making, purpose and goals, activities, feedback, and creativity and growth. The impression of group members about these qualities provides an analysis of the internal functioning of the organization and leads to some conclusions and prognostications.

The use of an inter-agency organization where co-operation, coordination, competition and domain are also important considerations requires a more complex perspective on an organization's relationship to its environment.

The conclusions show some weakness for the organization in the areas of clarity about its identity and its purpose and goals. These are in part explained by the organization's need to represent each of its members who have corporate needs and expectations of their own.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

An understanding of the community development process can be enriched by its consideration in the context of organization theory in particular and systems theory in general. Both of these theories lend considerable insight into the manner in which community development is applied and should contribute a better understanding of the dynamics which contribute to or diminish the effectiveness of the community development process. The integral linkages between these two theories and their relationship to community development will first be established in the body of the thesis, followed by a case study which demonstrates how they might be applied to a community development experience. The consequence is the provision of a useful diagnostic tool which can be applied in other circumstances especially where the organizational dynamics of the community may be consuming much of its internal resources.

The choice of an inter-agency organization to illustrate the organizational factors in a system allows the thesis to focus more precisely on the internal mechanisms which are the impetus to activities external to the boundaries the organization has established for itself. Inter-agency groups are complicated by a variety of unique dynamics, not the least of which includes the convergence of interests, and at the same time potential competition for external resources. The management of internal organizational needs for things such as communication, decision-making and leadership are particularly highlighted.

One of the essential steps of conceiving of a community as a social system is in appreciating that the community itself exists within a broader and even more complex system which profoundly affects what occurs within the organization. The second crucial recognition should be that a system (organization or community) has internal process characteristics which directly affect its ability to achieve goals and objectives. This thesis will place emphasis upon the latter of these two particular systemic factors (internal organizational characteristics) while giving secondary emphasis to a community's environmental context.

While Allport provides this elaborate and wordy definition of a system, "...any recognizably delimited aggregate of dynamic elements that are in some way interconnected and interdependant and that continue to operate together according to certain laws and in such a way as to produce some characteristic total effect." (1955, p. 469), he also summarizes his description of a system as "...something that is concerned with some kind of activity and preserves a kind of integration or unity". (1955, p. 469.)[1.] This bears a meaningful resemblance to most definitions of community development, including the critical ingredients of community (integration or unity) and development process (activity). This thesis concentrates on the understanding of the community as an organization, including the

---

1. Systems theory, particularly in its early development, tended to focus more on "closed systems" where interactions with the environment were not dealt with because essentially all such transactions either took place within the system or were irrelevent. With the evolution of the theory a greater focus has developed on open systems where relationship of the system to its environment is given much importance.

characteristics of integration necessary to implement environmental change or development. The concept of community development as a process is also fundamental to its systems nature by virtue of the inherent quality of change, which Allport refers to as "dynamic" (1955, p. 462). Therefore, while emphasis is given to the development of organizational structure and internal integration, this cannot be considered in isolation of the community's place within the environment. The environment is defined by Daft as "... all elements existing outside the boundary of the organization that have potential to affect all or part of the organization." (1986, p. 49).

The case of the Red Deer Community Services Network will illustrate this systems context. The Network is a collection of community services who have banded together on the basis of some common needs, to share resources and implement specific activities designed to address their mutual interests. It was developed as a consequence of a deliberate, planned strategy and is the contemporary equivalent of similar inter-agency efforts in Red Deer's recent past. The Network provides an appropriate example of an organization which is still relatively new and therefore makes most relevant study material accessible. It is also operating in a discernible environment i.e. the whole community of agencies serving the public's educational recreational and social needs. The case study provides an example of how the internal factors operant in an organization can be assessed, weaknesses and strengths identified, and the implications for systemic impact predicted.

The Network has the unique quality of consisting of a variety of otherwise independent organizations which operate in virtually the same environment. Thus, the issues of power, control, co-operation and most importantly co-ordination are important. These concepts also have systems implications which will be illustrated through an analysis of the Network.

A key and pervasive problem in the community development process is the need to devote energy to maintain the organization in addition to that required to affect change beyond its boundaries. While in the name of efficiency and public accountability, organizations strive to convert their inputs into outputs as quickly and economically as possible, there needs to be recognition that the organization requires inputs to maintain its own integrity. These inputs, in the form of energy devoted to communication and system control, must be additional to that devoted to the generation of outputs which have an impact on the larger environment. The Network as an example, must expend some of the energy and resources invested by participants in the sustenance of the organizational unit. If the energy is committed to internal development, organizational culture can evolve and provide the system with the integral strength it requires to resist natural disorganizing tendencies which arise as a result of factors such as membership attrition and fluctuating environmental conditions.

Purpose of this Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is, using the Red Deer Community Services Network as a case study, to illustrate the use of organizational development, organizational culture and systems theory in facilitating the community development process. These well documented concepts can provide a useful framework for the further comprehension of a community process. Community development draws from various other more specific fields of study such as sociology, anthropology and psychology to explain the process at work. While this multi-model approach frustrates universal understanding it provides for a more useful approach to comprehending the wide diversity of real life situations where the community development process is being applied by identifying areas of commonality and shared concepts. The enormous potential complexity of social systems where community development is a strategy for change, has led to the need for a large assortment of conceptual tools.

This thesis makes use of organizational and systems theory to enhance an understanding of the more fundamental aspects of community development. These address the basic structures of the process; the organizational needs of the social system and its relationship to the environment in which it exists. The case study will illustrate this approach.

Method

The appropriate information on the community development process, systems theory, organizational development and interagency relationships will come from the literature. The thesis will utilize this to develop a theoretical basis for the case study.

The case study itself will use the personal experience and observations of the author, interviews, file and article research as well as a survey instrument. These will all contribute to a thorough description of the historical and environmental context of the Red Deer Community Services Network in addition to the more critical analysis of the internal characteristics of the organization.

The thesis consists of four chapters plus appendicies. The second chapter reviews of the community development process and breaks the concept into its component parts to emphasize the importance of the key concepts of internal organizational process and environmental context. The chapter concludes with the development of a list of characteristics of organizational culture. The third chapter is devoted to a descriptive case study of the Red Deer Community Services Network. It explores the unique nature of inter-agency organizations and the history of previous interagency efforts in Red Deer. The construction and purpose of the survey instrument is explained in detail and the results are analyzed in Chapter 3.

The last chapter contains the final analysis, discussion and conclusions about the Network. Utilizing conceptual structures from systems and organizational theory and integrating them with community development, this discussion will lead to the identification of particular strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the conclusions will be drawn and recommendations made based on a community development perspective which has been enhanced by an analytic framework borrowed from unique but similar disciplines. Conclusions will also be drawn about the merit and usefulness of the inclusion of organizational and systems concepts in community development.

Limitations

Despite the use of a survey instrument, and the emphasis on quantitative analysis sometimes associated with the systems approach, this thesis is largely non-quantitative in nature. The survey plays a significant role in the case study and contributes to the description of the Network. It also provides a mechanism by which the integration of organizational and systems theory into community development can be illustrated. As a series of rating scales, the instrument provides only ordinal data. Analysis is restricted to descriptive statistics.

This thesis does not research in depth the history of Systems theory or of Organizational theory. The basic concepts of both are explored and discussed relative to their applicability to the community development process.

The nature of inter-agency relationships and of organizations devoted to promoting co-ordination and co-operation is introduced for the purposes of the case study. However, this study does not propose to draw inductive conclusions about this topic, as it would need to be so complex and comprehensive as to warrant a thesis devoted exclusively to that topic.

Significance

Roland Warren first identified the potential for both organizational theory and system theory as contributors to a more comprehensive understanding of the process of community development (1967, pp. 86-90). He saw the former as a means of assisting a practitioner in understanding the nature of his working environment and particularly the dynamics of leadership. In Systems Theory he sees promise in envisioning organizational relationships horizontally: across the structure of the community and vertically: in the power relationships between segments of the community. (ibid., p. 90)

This thesis will attempt to further enrich the study of community development by elaborating upon the process component of the concept, as it is in this area where the linkage with a systems perspective is most profound. A review of the crucial nature of process in community development as facilitated by the use of systems theory will provide for a more complete understanding and in turn, improved practical application. Systems theory can provide the conceptual tools to illustrate the fundamental role of process in community development, and in terms of practical application can emphasize the importance of turning the process orientation back onto the internal organization. In the best tradition of systems this evolves into a symbiotic arrangement of the concepts, each elaborating the other. The consequence is that a new perspective on the community development process emerges which will contribute to the ongoing evolution of the field. With this comes knowledge that a practitioner might utilize in improving the process wherever it is being implemented.

CHAPTER II

Community Development Process

Introduction

Community Development, because of its general appeal as a means of social change in such a diversity of circumstances and settings should be defined or clarified. Although there are many published (but personal) definitions and opinions of community development each reflecting somewhat unique emphasis, there is also a large measure of consistency about several key elements in the concept. These are elaborated in the following sections of this chapter and culminate with an operant definition for the purpose of this thesis.

Davie et al (1979) claim to have examined more than 200 before coming up with their own. Community development can be described as a deliberate democratic activity, focusing on an existing social and geographical grouping of people who participate in the solution of common problems for the common good, (Davie, 1979). It remains necessary to establish first a philosophical framework of community development. On the basis of a thorough study of the historical roots of community development, as well as its relationship to various other related fields of study, it is my belief that community development is best considered as a concept that encompasses a vast array of developmental activities. Some definitions of community development tend to be so narrow as to exclude a great deal of what might by others be readily labelled community development, such as those which emphasize a locality orientation for community, while others are so broad as to exclude virtually nothing at all. In either case, the consequence is a distraction from the ultimate objective of attempting to utilize the practical experiences found within the field, and the theory found in the conjecture of scholars to produce a universally reliable body of knowledge. Therefore, a useful framework will be one that draws upon the experience and writings of others and does not restrict the use of the theories and knowledge accumulated in separate but related fields i.e. organizational development, social psychology etc.

The inclusion of the term process is critical to the full understanding of the nature of community development, yet is frequently left off the term when it is spoken or written. Some authors include it as a matter of principle, the most notable examples being Biddle & Biddle (1965) while many others include it in their discussion but leave it off in their common usage of the term. As Davie et al (1979) noted in their review of 200 definitions "... they agree that community development is a process..." (p. 2). Whether or not it is present always in common usage is secondary to the assumption that is integral to the concept. This conclusion is also fundamental to this thesis.

Much of the discussion about community development centres on semantic or context issues. In fact, for a concept with such a diversity of applications unanimity on definition is unrealistic. An oversimplified description of the concept would diminish its wide appeal.

Community Development - The Historical Context

Historically the term community development can be traced back to 19th Century colonial Europe. It was coined as a phrase descriptive of a variety of methods for economic exploitation in the colonies. (Mayo, 1975). This evolved into a more positive connotation in the 19th Century as traditional colonial powers began to withdraw from their overseas interests. It has been suggested in fact that three of the basic elements of community development; participation, democratic decision-making, and decentralization were considered to be critical to the success of eventual self-rule in the colonies (Brokensha and Hodge, 1969).

Community development is still broadly practiced under that name in the third world by international agents such as the United Nations and government personnel of individual countries. While the objectives of these modern community development proponents may be somewhat more consistent with those of the host nation, it is nonetheless considered to be an effective strategy for change. It still has a strong top-down initiative in practice, however, which suggests that even the choice of community development as a means to an unspecified end, if made outside of the community of individuals being directly affected, is contradictory. Most authors who make an effort to define community development include the notion of local initiative (in theory) as being fundamental. It may therefore still be practiced in less than its purest form, which colonial overtones, in parts of the world where it was first introduced and where its colonial overtones are emphasized over local initiative.

Domestically in North America, community development was originally associated with social pathology, the most obvious being poverty (Lotz, 1977). It is necessary to consider the social and economic conditions in industrial North America and Britian. The burgeoning industrial state was having far-reaching consequences for the previously working poor who were now being threatened with the prospects of being unemployed and penniless. At the same time there was emerging, among the upper classes, a new articulation of philanthropy and charity as the solutions to the manifestations of poverty. Perlman and Gurin (1971) saw the emergence of upper-class compassion and charity as a response to the potential for anger and fear arising from widespread poverty. This phenomenon was given its sharpest focus during and immediately following the depression of the early to mid-30's. It was during this period, however, when the pressures on charitable response became so extreme that a movement began to develop better ways of addressing the extent of the problems. We saw that:

> "The early efforts at community organization were directed almost entirely to middle and upper class philanthropists and volunteers, one of whose motivations was to find more efficient ways of dispensing charitable funds."
>
> (Perlman and Gurin, p. 3)

About the same time governments began to respond with statutory programs. This was the beginning of major growth in the social safety net or what is referred to by some as the welfare state. The convergence of private charitable philanthropy with the programs of the welfare state in turn led to additional pressures for co-ordination and planning. Thus, we see similar but different needs emerging in the delivery of social services programs; that for efficiency and organization which in turn lead to the development of private non-profit organizations as well as the need for planning and co-ordination of government services, which lead to the development of bureaucratic specialization and centralization.

Community development concepts, while present in the many approaches to domestic social problems, took a back seat to social planning as an alternative approach in addressing these needs. Jack Rothman (1978) in his now classic article "Three Models of Community Organization Practice, Their Mixing and Phasing" identifies Locality Development, Social Planning and Social Action as unique methods of implementing social change. These all bear some resemblance, in varying degrees, to the community development process.

He tends to most closely link Locality Development to Community Development as the latter is defined by Biddle and Biddle (1965) in its self-help bottom-up orientation. Social Planning consists of more centrally controlled top-down professional planning while he refers to Social Action as the reformulation of traditional power relationships within the community. Rothman (1978) also acknowledges that all three models have a place in the deliberate intervention in a community's social environment. (p. 43) Therefore, we can see that in the theory as well as in practical experience there are a number of operant strategies for achieving social change. The precise mixture varies greatly depending upon a wide variety of factors, including the needs and goals of the group and the contemporary circumstances.

One shortcoming of Rothman's typology is that it attempts to force distinctions between processes that are only subtly different in an incredibly complex environment, i.e. the community. In particular, the difference between "Locality Development" and "Social Action" may not be as extreme as they appear at first glance. While Social Action assumes a more extreme confrontative attitude relative to the status quo and Locality Development a more passive rational approach, both are more grass roots in their approach to change. They both emphasize a self-help orientation based upon the exercise of a latent community power base (i.e. the people) whereas Social Planning is a technical top-down approach exercise by institutional power holders. What Rothman refers to as a lack of democratic problem-solving and the static traditional community in Locality Development, is not very different from the social injustice and inequity that he describes as a basic assumption of Social Action. While clear distinctions between the two exist in a number of other areas, this fundamental orientation marks them as being together different from Social Planning as a social change strategy.

Another shortcoming is that the typology implies concurrent utilization of strategies within a predefined community. This risks the use of strategies that could be construed to be contradictory. In particular, the employment of social planners by the "power structure" may be untenable to social activists who may experience the need to challenge the values and goals of the power structure. In the same vein, locality development workers may insist on compromises to decisions made by social planners whose judgment is founded on facts and analysis. While the planning process incorporates feedback and the choice between alternatives, compromise eventually can cause planners to question the value of feedback in their process, perhaps to the extent of abandoning it and relying exclusively on emperical indicators and prescribed solutions.

The real dilemma in attempting to understand the nature of the community development process is in trying to retain its value of broad application without limiting it with specific terminology. In review of what has been written about community development, it is my conclusion that it is not so conceptually dissimilar from other dynamics present in social systems to identify it as a completely independent field of study. In particular organizational theory which in turn is closely tied to systems theory and social-psychology is a particularly appropriate complementary field of study. This, however, makes it all the more necessary to establish, for the sake of consistency within the framework of this thesis, what the community development process means.

The Community

The most obvious and perhaps common efforts to specify the community development process is to begin by describing the community in geographic or physical terms. This locality specific orientation is found in the most popular of community development authors, Rothman (1978), Biddle and Biddle (1965), Cary (1970), Warren (1967) and Nisbet (1966) and is perhaps even more common among authors writing on specific examples and case studies. The narrow definition that geographic criteria provides is one of the few opportunities to put tangible boundaries on a concept that defies most other simplifications. Locality specific definitions are often linked to the concept of Gemeinschaft originated by Tonnies (1963). The community in this context is characterized by commonly held proximate residence, activities, values and is usually considered to be smaller in scale than a city. (Coleman, 1966.) It is also rather sentimentally associated with the elusive but romanticized notion of "sense of community" in the Tonnies tradition. This, at its simplest, is a form of mutual identification among residents of a particular physically discernable location.

This territorial factor is considered to be too exclusive in nature to the many activities that can without it share more substantial features with the community development process. An alternative way of thinking about a community is to look for the crucial ingredient of organization. Community members are organized within a framework which links them in relationships which have functional criteria rather than ties them (rather artificially) within physical boundaries. These boundaries often capture many unwilling members and members who are socially unrelated in any other significant way.

The concept of community suffers from the tendency to restrict it to territorial limits. It connotes an association with a small town, an urban neighbourhood or a rural district which, in the modern post-industrial age in North America, is no longer always appropriate. The emergence of the specialization of tasks, as a response to the greater levels of technical and bureaucratic sophistication, has lead to a further reconsideration of traditional definitions. In the social services for example, the growth of the social safety net meant the development of new, larger and complex forms of social programs eg. employment programs, mental health programs, child development programs etc. Each of these resulted in the appearance of highly trained specialists accompanied by a burgeoning bureaucracy. This "specialization" was occuring in all social systems as more intricate strategies, solutions and personnel resources are being applied to the needs of our urban technical society. Coleman (1966) in particular, saw this specializing force as a disorganizing one. With it came other disorganizing factors which he identified as mass communications, rapid change, the growing irrelevance of existing constraints and hierarchal structures of policy development and in particular, new inequitable distributions of power. These disorganizing forces must have counter-balancing forces in order to maintain some form to the system. In the absence of these counter-balancing forces, the eventual tendency was to have the development of a multitude of semi-independent subsystems, each with the internal pressures to develop self-sustaining mechanisms. Community development, if it is restricted to a locality specific orientation, could be considered as one of the foremost counter-balancing measures to disorganization. If our conception of community is broadened to include organizations of people in other relationships, the promise and potential of the community development process is greatly enriched.

The nature of the word "organization" can be as confusing and obtuse as community. Organizations in the simplest sense refer to combinations of people with common objectives. These include profit making companies; large and small political groups, fraternal and service groups, groups serving or consisting of age - specific populations and countless others. There are also, however, many other groupings of people who can be characterized as being organized, but which may not be active on an ongoing basis and/or which do not have a specific name label or title associated with them. The key elements of common objectives and ordinal identity among members remain, however. Ordinal identity is the reference point of a member whose identity is considered only within the context of the organization. This idea is consistent with F. H. Allport's (in Katz and Kahn, 1978) Event-Structure Theory and in particular the concept of "partial inclusion" (Katz and Kahn, p. 7). "Partial inclusion...." refers to the fact that organizational membership and role behaviour generally include only a piece of personality. Organizations are thus composed not of people, but of common behaviour segments." (p. 7) When applied to communities, this points out that individuals are members of many communities simultaneously and that each consumes varying amounts of ones personality. Communities in turn are not likely to have more than a minor part of an individual and, the part that qualifies a person as "member" is affected by many other involvements.

It is crucial to an understanding of the community development process that the nature of "community" be identified first in consistent, rational terms. The label "community" is used in such a diversity of circumstances that if there are no qualities to the label which identify it as unique from other groupings of individuals its meaning begins to get diluted. The key ingredient to the community proposed here is that some form of organization exists which enables members to define for themselves whether or not they are within the bounds of the community on the basis of a conscious decision, rather than an accident of physical proximity to others. That is not to say that neighbourhoods or villages or towns or even cities cannot become communities; only that they cannot be considered as such and employ the community development process without some form of organization. This means that once individuals begin to relate to one another for the purpose of achieving mutually determined ends in a co-operative fashion, they can be considered to be organized and a community. However, a dozen individuals living in close proximity to one another, but whose needs, lifestyles and attributes result in them living independently from one another, cannot realistically be determined a community. The community development process has no role in the lives of these individuals until they organize their communal interests and likewise individuals have no contribution to make to the community development process until they have made a commitment to the organization.

There are four key elements to the definition of organization (Bedeian, 1980; Daft, 1986):

1. Organizations are social structures composed of individual human beings,
2. Organizations exist for a specific set of purposes and goals such as meeting mutual needs,
3. Organizations employ a number of activities as means toward the achievement of their goals,
4. Organizations have an identifiable boundary which is visible in terms of its definition of what (and who) lies within the boundary and what (and who) is external to it.

(Daft, 1986, p. 9).

These also become key elements in view of the need for organization in communities. This does not lead us to the inevitable conclusion that organizations and communities are equivalent entities. Many organizations, such as institutions, profit-oriented corporations and churches would not necessarily be considered to be communities. These types of organizations often consist of people organized around the need to do things for others rather than themselves. Likewise, the word "community" is used and will continue to be used as a noun to describe virtually anything that includes more than one human participant. The necessary link between them is the use of the community development process which, if present, makes an organization a community (perhaps temporarily) and implies a degree of organization in a community.

Development

Development is another of those words, that is so broad and vague as to be of limited value. Its many connotations and associations with particular sectors of human activity (eg. economic development, personal development, resource development) make it necessary to define its meaning in the Community Process. This is development within a social system (labeled a community) and possessing the elements of organization outlined above.

The most universal of notions about development is that it implies change. Change from what is - to what is objectified as preferable.

In some of the earliest conceptions of community development, both the assessment of present conditions and the preferred future, the change that was to be brought about, was determined by someone outside the community. In Cox et al (1979) a 1955 United Nations definition of community development suggested that it was a mechanism by which national or central government policies were localized. In fact much modern international development which includes procedures or strategies called community development continues to bring about changes in specific segments of society as they are deemed desirable by those outside the "community". While this may not be consistent with idealized community development which requires that community members decide for themselves the need for and direction for change, we do not exist in an ideal social environment. A degree of outside leadership or initiative continues to be present in mmuch community development practice both domestically and internationally. However, if community development is appropriate and ssuccessful in a community, the process will quickly integrate local leadership and initiative supplanting the role of outsiders. This has lead in some cases to a quick reconsideration on the part of centralized authorities of the value and risks to their positions inherent in community development (Hyman, 1973).

Whether the change is initiated internally or externally, it has been conceptualized as being of three types in a social system, (Davie et al 1979).

1. A change in the physical resources of a community.
   eg. Infastructure, employment, production,
2. A change in the decision making and problem-solving processes in a community eg. political power.

3. A change in abilities and skills of individual community members.

(Davie et al, 1979, pp. 3-4)

In all cases the process begins with an improvement orientation. That is, there is something wrong or weak about what is in a community that can be changed to something that is superior. Walker (1961) noted a similarity in this process to the one that individuals undertake with a therapist in psychiatric treatment. Development can be considered to be a type of community therapy, although this can connote a greater than necessary emphasis upon pathology in a community. Improvement may involve addressing an insufficiency rather than a sickness. The status quo may in fact not be health-threatening, but, from the view of community members, what could be is preferred. An awareness of a shared need or problem is but the first step in the developmental process (Davie et al, 1979).

AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

The awareness stage is fundamental to the entire process, not only because it initiates the process, but also because it is sometimes the most difficult to accomplish. If it is not achieved, the process cannot continue. This stage includes moving from the awareness present in the minds of a few to a stage where the awareness is shared throughout the community. The onus is on the leaders, visionaries, or facilitators to assure that the whole community is exposed to a learning process which changes the state of member consciousness relative to their environment. The extent to which this consciousness is shared by community members determines eventual success in future stages of the process.

Perhaps the most profound philosopher on this stage of the process is Paulo Freire (1970) who, although concentrating upon change in the political and power structures of an oppressed society, proposed that this is accomplished through the "education" of the common man. Freire suggests that an individual's conception of himself is improved through a process of conscientizacao which is translated to mean..."learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality " (p. 19). Only once this awareness has been achieved is progress and change in the status quo possible. Friere goes on to link the process of organization with education as a joint means of achieving transformation in a community or a society (1970, p. 180).

The manner in which this educational process is implemented varies depending upon the nature of the issue requiring illumination and upon the cultural factors operative in a community. Fundamental issues in the very structure of a community's political decision-making order may require a long term, multi-faceted strategy which employs a variety of cognitive and affective techniques, whereas a relatively simple change to a community's physical infrastructure may only require the circulation of facts and figures to raise the awareness of members.

Another major factor which affects not only the process of learning, but the entire development process is that of organizational or internal culture. This should not be confused with the dominant environmental culture within which communities and organizations exist and interact. Culture when reduced to its simplest elements can exist uniquely within individual communities as well as in the social environment. The environmental culture most commonly referred to a territorial or locality orientation. Organizational culture is not unlike the common connotation of the term but does not include this geographic component. Edgar Schein (1985) defined culture as:

> "a pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems." (p. 9)

Schein suggests that culture, when defined this way, is applicable to organizations and to subgroups within them and forms a very critical and poorly understood aspect of group dynamics. In particular, culture constructs the filters used by community members to comprehend the messages they receive (Schein, p. 13). The communication process is of course fundamental to the potential for learning and increased awareness in the community.

Cultures, like communities, are not by definition created automatically by the artificial process of drawing a boundary around a collecton of individuals and labeling them a group or a community or an organization. A culture evolves slowly as the collective awareness of people is transformed into shared norms and values which eventually are integrated into group activities. Communities,when defined in organizational terms, are subject to the dominant culture of their environment and of the cultures of the other groups to which members belong. This is in part what Allport was referring to as partial inclusion (Katz and Kahn, 1978) which is discussed in more detail in the section on community.

To raise the awareness of a need, problem, injustice, or insufficiency in a community, it must be recognized that this is basically a learning process. As such it can be accomplished by a variety of methods depending upon two critical factors. First, the medium or the means by which the information is transmitted or shared must reflect the relative complexity of the content. Second, the awareness raisers must recognize that medium must be consistent with the culture of the community and that the culture and community are potentially transformed by the process.

Activity

If a community is to develop and change is to take place, awareness must be followed with concrete action. Where action begins and ends is usually the most obvious component of the community development process because there are physical activities taking place which are observable and sometimes measurable. Action, in the Nucleus Process Stages of Biddle and Biddle (1965), is a culminating stage in a process continuum. There is, however, a great deal of preparation that is necessary before activity can be initiated. In order for the process to continue to the action stage, the issues require focus, the organization requires more formalization and the actions require planning.

Awareness of what the problem or need is does not mean the community has proceeded far enough in the learning process to enable it to focus on the issue. The information may have been delivered and filtered by individual members but it needs to be integrated into a group understanding before it can be acted upon. There are references to this process in each of Biddle & Biddle's (1965) pre-action stages (pp. 92-98). In small informal projects this process may be facilitated by conversation and non-structured sharing opportunities. In more formally organized structures it may entail an elaborate plan to clarify perceptions and adopt unified positions involving various group development techniques. The means by which this focusing is accomplished varies not only with the degree of group structure, but is also determined by the organizational culture as discussed in the preceding section.

Also necessary during this period is a group decision on the degree of formalization necessary to act upon their awareness. The options in this respect are almost limitless; from a highly structured format where every community member knows his role, to a completely non-structured community where leadership and decision-making is highly dynamic. Again this varies from group to group with no particular degree of structure being any more appropriate than another. Even in the most loosely structured group, however, there must be some means of progressing from the awareness/planning stage to action. This process maintenance role is likely to come from the leadership, whether that leader comes from a structurally defined position or from the emergence of a strong personality endorsed by the membership. The issue of leadership in the community development process is discussed in greater detail in a later section.

The last pre-action stage involves adoption of a process of planning. This process is widely documented, particularly in physical and land-use planning, but it is essentially similar in the context of the community development process. It also varies in sophistication with the group and the task but the steps are chronologically the same. Once the group consciousness about a need or problem has been accomplished, the following steps can be undertaken:

1. Articulation of the need or problem for group affirmation.
2. Development of alternative strategies for resolution of problem or to meet need.
3. Selection of one or more of the alternatives.
4. Implementation.
5. Evaluation and feedback to step one.

The first three of the above steps involve a sub-process of group consultation and decision-making which is facilitated or constrained by the structure established by the group. The first is perhaps the most difficult to do in that it calls for the determination of goals and objectives. These naturally emerge from the purpose or the issues that have been brought to the community's attention but are articulated in such a way that all know when they have been achieved. It is likely that a number of goals and related objectives will be established as the beginning of the real manifestations of what to this point in the process has been mostly talk. Group agreement is necessary on the validity and appropriateness of the goals if members are then expected to act on them. This affirmation does not come easily to most groups but, as stated earlier, it is a prerequisite. The discussion, negotiation, conflict and conciliation inherent in this step contributes to the development of group culture and unity in the long term. This group decision making process is utilized again when strategies are developed and chosen.

There are usually a number of ways in which resources can be combined to meet objectives and address needs. Each of the potential strategies or actions has to be evaluated in terms of their potential for: 1. success (effectiveness), 2. economic use of resources (efficiency) and, 3. the possible side effects. This evaluation will lead to the immediate elimination of some alternatives and the eventual assessment that there are probably several strategies that are roughly equivalent when all factors are considered.

Some communities are equipped with the resources to implement several strategies but most need to make a choice among those estimated to be similar. The process of choice is again a test of the community's culture and unity. In authoritarian structures the choice is likely to be made by centralized power holders without consultation of the membership. Such decisions are made on purely political grounds or on scientific/technical grounds as in Rothman's Social Planning Model (1978). In the community development process, however, the choice among alternative strategies is made after thorough consultation with those whom it affects.

The flow of this planning process moves the community into the action stages where specific activities are implemented to change conditions in the direction designed by the group. In the social environment these activities tend to be labour intensive and somewhat more difficult to measure than economic or resource development activities. In Friere's philosophy for example, the process of conscientizacao involves activities which contribute to learning, learning which in turn liberates people from oppression (Freire, 1970). Both learning and liberation suggest a greater subjective assessment than does the development of a well for a remote village. Whatever the nature of the activity, it is presumably one that takes place in an environment of support and co-operation. This is achieved as a consequence of the participation of community members in the process.

Neither good planning nor support, however, guarantees that the chosen strategy was the appropriate one in terms of its effectiveness, efficiency or unanticipated consequences. A means by which these can be assessed must be built into the process and agreed to in order for feedback to be integrated back into plan. In an ideal organization these indicators would be a part of the goal statements, empirically measurable and formally adopted. In most social systems, however, assessments are created after the fact, are highly subjective and only tacitly approved. The beginning of the evaluation stage of the planning process leads to the continuation of development.

Continuation

Biddle and Biddle (1965) labeled these post-activity periods in the process as "New Projects" and "Continuation". They describe the first as following the evaluation of previous activities with a view to deciding upon involvement in future related issues. They also see this including the enlargement of the membership/power base and participation in increasingly more complex problems and needs (ibid. 100-101). It can lead to the potential for more controversy as well as co-operation with other organizations. Continuation according to Biddle & Biddle depends to a large degree upon the "health" of the group and its ability to sustain internal leadership. The major flaw with this conception is that it does not harmonize these latter stages with the earliest steps in the overall process, particularly awareness and pre-activity preparation. While continuation may be desirable and appropriate it may, on the other hand, be appropriate for the process to terminate. In either case this determination should be a natural part of the community development process. The abilities of the group to make decisions and implement them should be applied to a review of activities and how they have impacted the internal system of the organization and its relationship with the environment. Success usually energizes the membership to undertake other tasks. Failure, especially if it can be associated with a specific decision, can be equally motivating. Whatever the outcome the group experience must be systematically integrated into a new awareness from which further activity may or may not emerge. A more specific feedback mechanism enables subsequent decision-making to be more precise. Corrections to the particular enterprises of an organization are made possible or in the extreme case an alternative may be chosen to replace a failed or completed activity.

The circuitous nature of a community development process is what distinguishes it from other forms of group activity. While a certain amount and type of achievement is possible without the feedback loop it is unlikely that there will be any growth or maturity experienced in the community without it. A process without a loop can be sustained for a long time by leadership, controversy or a large reservour of resources but, by definition, it has an end. The end of any process or community is not a particularly undesirable outcome if in fact that is a deliberate choice on the part of the participants. But, if termination is the desired choice, then that must come about as a result of a post-activity assessment. Processes are not in theory designed to be complete when an activity is completed. Some awareness must be achieved about the impact of its efforts relative to its purpose. This revised awareness then should lead to subsequent activity which may include termination of process and disbanding the community.

Process

The concepts of process and systems are integral to community development because they suggest a dynamic state. Development, as discussed above means a conscious movement or change.

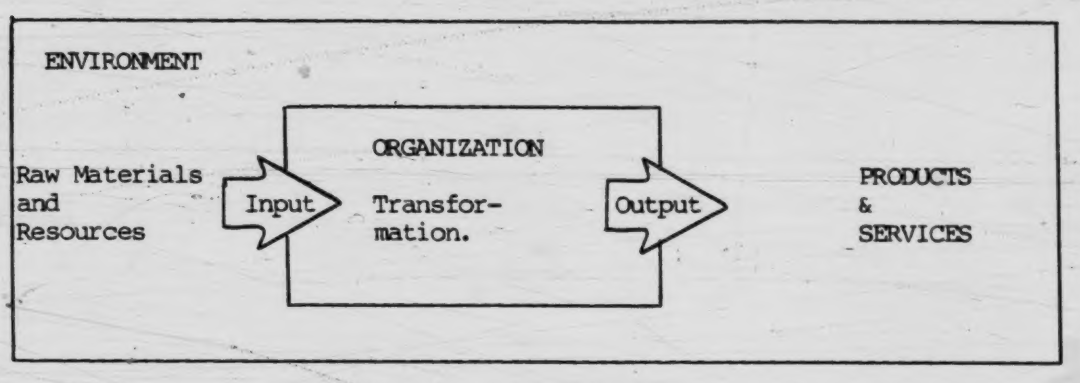
Open Systems Theory has very functional applications to community development; as it does to organizational theory. Roland Warren (1967) makes reference to both as having potential for use in studying and comprehending communities. General Systems Theory was conceived as being a universally applicable means of reducing all study in science to fundamental elements and thereby unifying the sciences in this regard. (Katz and Kahn, 1978). In fact its conceptual nature also holds great promise for comprehending social systems, as complex and dynamic as they may be, although compromises are necessary on the demands for the absolute rigor and experimental validity that the physical sciences are able to achieve.

The essential ingredients of a system are remarkably similar to that of a community. Daft (1986) defines a system as:

> "...a set of interrelated elements that acquires inputs from the environment, transforms them and discharges outputs into the external environment." (p. 10)

In Boulding (1956) social systems, which includes communities, are rated as being the most complex of systems. Although this complexity makes conclusions and predictions based on the study of "cases" difficult, the relative simplicity of an open systems model and its accompanying conceptual tools make it considerably easier to try.

FIGURE 1.



Adapted from Daft 1986, p. 11.

In Figure 1 society is the ultimate environment in which communities and organizations are created and interact with one another, and is also that which they seek to modify. Communities draw into them, as inputs, human beings and other economic or physical resources as their purpose demands. These human and physical resources are subjected to an internal process which transforms them into outputs. The outputs in turn are designed to modify the environment in which the community exists. The extent of environmental change is of course dependent upon the objectives and resources of the system relative to the size and rigidity of the social environment. Broad social change is beyond the ambitions of most communities who seek only to achieve realistic corrections to their immediate sphere of influence. This in fact is likely to be another organization or system within which the community has developed as a subsystem. Friere, whose visions are societal, seeks to have communities, on a localized scale, develop for themselves a means of liberating their innate abilities, produce aware and enlightened individuals, and eliminate oppression in the environment. Most communities simply want to harness the energies and awarenss of their individual members within a social environment, focus their abilities on a perceived need or problem, undertake a course of action and produce a change.

There are, in any social system, two processes taking place; one internal and the other external (Shein, 1985). The external process is essentially the one described above where the process defines the context for the relationship with the environment. Control over the outputs of this process to a large extent is lost to the subsystem once they enter the environment, as they interact with and are modified by other systems. The outputs may or may not have had other desired impact on the environment and future inputs drawn from it may or may not be different from the original as a result.

The internal process addresses the need to establish and maintain an organizational culture and is in some respects more important to the understanding of community development. The failure to address this internal process and develop strength and integrity in the community leads to an ineffectual external process, which in turn undermines the apparent purpose of the subsystem's existence.

Katz and Kahn (1978) introduce the concept of entropy in a social structure. Entropy is borrowed from the physics term for a natural tendency of a system to disperse into an ever-increasing state of disorder and inertness. Their contention is that the same forces are acting upon social systems and that systemic survival is dependent upon reversing this entropic process (ibid., p. 25). What they call "acquiring negative entropy" (ibid., p. 25) might also be conceived in terms of developing counter-entropic skills. The strengthening of organizational culture and internal integration as per Schein (1985) are means by which this can be accomplished. The factors affecting internal integration as outlined by Schein will therefore contribute to a checklist of community health which will be used in the case study in the next part of this thesis.

The Community Development Process - A Definition

Previous sections have discussed the components of the community development process phrase apart from one another. They are combined here to provide yet another definition which integrates the various elements of the process, thereby establishing the basis for subsequent utilization within the text of this thesis.

The Community Development Process is the means by which a group of people, who are characterized by an internal organization with a collective sense of purpose and direction, undertake planned activities to accomplish a change in their environment.

This is substantially a systems definition of community development and combines the key elements of:

1. A generalized concept of community which is not necessarily locality oriented but recognizes the fundamental characteristic of internal organization.
2. A community wide awareness of the issues or needs requiring action.
3. An integrated participatory planning process for the development of activities.

4. A process of acquiring inputs and generating outputs for the purpose of changing the environment.

While the rest of this thesis, in particular the case study, will emphasize its internal systematic functioning, the relationship of the social unit with its environment is also important. The particular aspect of this relationship that is of concern here is the ability of the organization to manage this relationship so that its identity remains secure. The social environment because of its complexity and overwhelming mass can impose formidable pressure on any of its subsystems. Schein describes the internal organizational mechanisms used to sustain the subsystem in an environment as "External Adaptation Issues" (1985, p. 52).

These concepts of open systems and organization are highly useful in explaining the processes that operate in a community. The community, as it is defined here, is subjected to the same obstacles, internal and external, in its developmental activity as any other organization. The extent to which it is able to develop appropriate means by which to cope with these obstacles, is a measure of its success both as an organization and as a community. If it can be determined that a social structure has acquired these means, and if they are consistent with traditional community development principles, it may be concluded that the community development process may be implemented. This is not to say that organizations cannot and do not exist and function without the community development process. It does mean that those unique structures called communities must exist as organizations and develop their own culture, technologies and means of potential continuation for the community development process to be successful. Success in this context refers to a community's ability to implement the process according to certain principles rather than on the measured success of outcomes, eg. environmental change.

These basic principles, which can be tested in a given social system are as follows:

The community must:

1. Achieve a means by which members can communicate with one another in order for awareness to be raised and the process facilitated,
2. Define boundaries which identify who is in the community and who is not,
3. Develop an internal order of power and status so that members can determine the role and responsibilities of themselves and others. This especially includes the role of leadership,
4. Provide for the development of intimacy, friendship and love.
5. Develop a sense of meaning and value that transcends articulated goals and that identifies the organization as unique and explains the unexplainable.
6. Provide a mechanism by which community members may participate in decision-making,

The development process must:

7. Articulate and focus on a purpose that is shared by community members,

8. Develop specific goals to which the purpose and future activities relate,
9. Provide a means by which goals can be achieved,
10. Provide for the evaluation of activities,
11. Assure that the outcomes of activity and process evaluation are integrated into the subsequent activities of the community.

These principles will form the framework around which an analysis of Red Deer Community Services Network will be developed. Each principle can be assessed and evaluated relative to the Network's internal operation and ability to function in its greater social environment. The internal or organizational factors are those which fall under the obligations of the "community" while the development process refers to any interactions that take place with the environment as a consequence of internal activities. These are activities which originate with the community and are the result of a deliberate planning process, including definition of goals, strategies and a mechanism for evaluation.

The above points will be developed into a series of organizational factors which will be used to determine the qualities of the community development process present in the Network. The method by which this is accomplished is explained in greater detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

The Red Deer Community Services Network - A Case Study

Introduction

This chapter will study the case of the Red Deer Community Services Network as an example of a new and developing community of human serving agencies. This study is a descriptive process whereby the organization is exposed in terms of its historical perspective as well as direct quantified responses from active community members. Data generated by a questionnaire serves only as a means of further describing the Network's functioning as it is perceived by those who participate in it. Thus, while some formative or proces evaluation is thereby inherent, summative or end product conclusions are neither possible nor appropriately sought. The purpose of the case study is to identify the characteristics of community process and organizational development present in the Network with a systems theory approach to community development. This approach was discussed in Chapter II. As in any case study the intent is not to prove or disprove theory but to use the theory as a conceptual model in the description of what is perceived to be an operating developmental process.

A complete description of the Network requires an understanding of its inter-agency nature. While the Network exists as an autonomous organization it does so only because it serves the needs of other agencies. It cannot be sustained without the active ongoing contribution of agencies who exist primarily for their own purposes and view participation in the Network as consistent with their own goals. It cannot be considered a sub- system of any one other organization but it may serve some subsystem functions for many eg. boundary spanning, some management, maintenance and adaptation functions. There are some unique aspects of inter-agency organizations that need to be considered when putting the Network into its social context.

This chapter will describe the Red Deer Community Services Network as a community and organization that is undertaking a developmental process. The study emphasizes development in the Network's internal integration as well as its environmental adaptation features.

Co-ordination and Co-operation - Inter-Agency Dynamics

Organizations, like all social systems exists within environments which influence the nature of the organization and its activities. Social and health serving agencies occupy a part of an environment which is extremely large and complex; that is the human beings within an identifiable, locality defined space. Thus, while geographical boundaries which define target populations are not always exactly coterminus there is often a large degree of commonality, especially around urban centres. In Red Deer for example, some agencies serve only people living within the City limits while others serve the immediately adjacent County as well, and others target all of Central Alberta. There is nevertheless substantial degree of common environment shared by these agencies if only measured by the number of their potential clients. In most social services every human being is a potential client and therefore an object for their organizational outputs.

Besides clients, the other environmental component that organizations share a need for is resources, resources that are absorbed by organizations in varying degrees and combinations according to their size, purpose and goals. Competition for clients and environmental commonalities are not exclusive to social service organizations however. Commercial organizations often compete for market shares and to a lesser degree the resources they need to produce and distribute or market their commodities.

The virtues of co-operation and co-ordination have some strong quasi-emotional aspects to them when they are applied to the human services. There is an implicit mandate imposed (and to some extent self-imposed) upon human welfare programs because of two major factors; efficiency and inherent value. Most social services are provided directly by government or by non-government organizations on a not-for-profit basis. In the case of government there is internal pressure to maximize productivity and eliminate waste in response to the growing public outcry regarding onerous taxation. Co-ordination and co-operation between government agencies and with non-government organizations are viewed as mechanisms by which the government can be seen to be efficient. Non-government agencies, most of which are dependant on government support to some degree, almost always include in their proposals for funding how, when, and why they intend to co-ordinate their activities with others. The implication is that they require all the support that they are requesting because they have taken measures to assure that those they receive are stretched to their maximum efficiency.

The other imperative for inter-agency co-ordination seems to be a psychological one. As Levine et al noted, "The co-operative theme which pervades much of American life is even more prescribed for personnel of non-profit agencies whose raison d'etre is the promotion of public welfare, (1963, pp. 11-86). Somehow there is an expectation that those involved in serving the social needs of a community should be models for the synergetic accomplishment of their goals. Whether this almost organic inclination of agencies in the social services to co-operate with one another is real or assumed is unknown, but it is a factor none-the-less. Given the human relations perspective one might expect in the training of personnel and in the value base that attracts volunteers to serve as board members and policy maker, it may not be an unrealistic assumption. The inclination, however, may or may not prove to be adequate in meeting the realities of inter-organizational co-ordination.

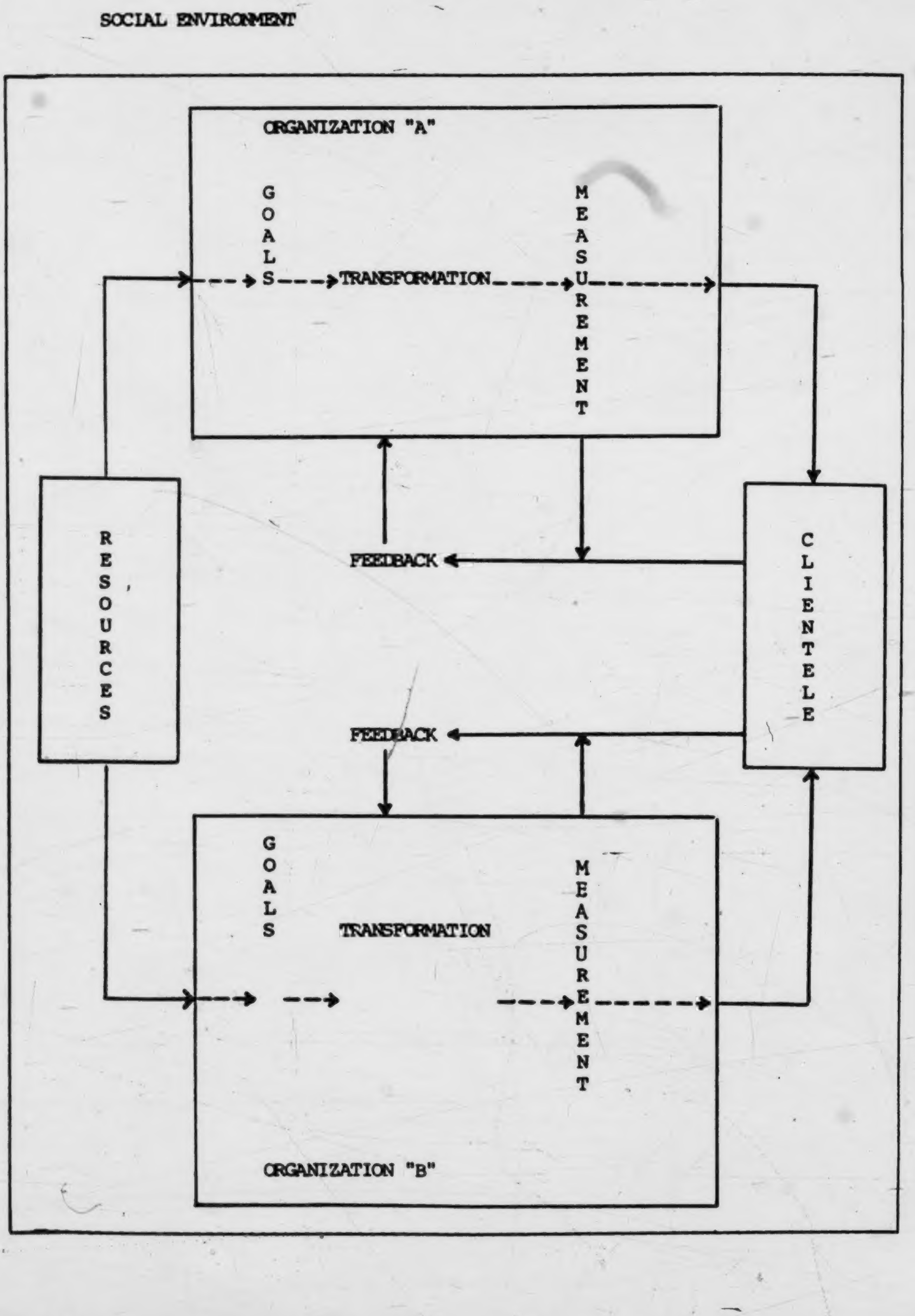
There is also an interesting irony that exists in relation to the merits of co-ordination and co-operation when the private and public sectors are compared. Warren (1977) in particular noted that while co-ordination in the public sector is an expectation, it is potential grounds for criminal prosecution in the private sector. While the passion for productivity and efficiency is imported from the private sector, from where much of the criticism about the waste of tax dollars originates, it is the public sector who must regulate certain parts of private sector against collusion with anti-trust legislation. While the consumers of privately produced goods are protected from too much inter-organizational co-ordination, the agencies of social services are expected to attend to their clientele in a co-ordinated manner. That is not to conclude that co-ordination is bad in the case of publicly provided services, only that the blanket application of values to both the public and private sector should be approached with caution.

Whatever the motivation, be it psychological, economic, or otherwise, to participate in co-operative affairs, organized efforts to facilitate them seem to emerge in the human services in every community. In Red Deer, for example, there have been three major organizations of this kind since 1960 and numerous minor ones, which tend to be more specific and short term. There is a type of common managerial sense about trying to maximize achievement of the goals of an ones own agency by working with those whose goals and domain are similar. Although there is some feeling that individual organizations seek their own continued viability above all else (Warren, 1977), participation in shared ventures can be viewed as an appropriate means of accomplishing just that.

The systems-process approach to organizations and community development also effectively illustrates the context within which inter-agency efforts unfold. Figure 2 shows a simplified version of a social environment where two organizations are operating simultaneously. The social environment would typically be geographically defined as described earlier. Such an environment would normally contain a large number of organizations, immeasurably complicating this simplified model. The resource and clientele pools would not be as self-contained as they appear in the model. The principles of systems dynamics are, however, consistent and are helpful in understanding the environmental and organizational factors present.

Each individual organization (A and B) functions independantly as a system, in that it begins by drawing resources from the environment into its internal process in types and quantities consistent with its own goals. The remainder of the internal process

FIGURE 2


SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT
ORGANIZATION "A"
GOALS
TRANSFORMATION
MEASUREMENT
RESOURCES
FEEDBACK
CLIENTELE
FEEDBACK
GOALS
TRANSFORMATION
MEASUREMENT
ORGANIZATION "B"

which includes the transformation of the inputs into outputs and their measurement, is also directed by the organizations purpose, goals and objectives. It is the points at which the agency's system interacts with the environment that inter-organizational commonalities emerge, in particular the client and resource pools

Several authors (Warren, 1977; Hasenfeld and Tropman, 1978; Levine and White, 1961; Levine et al, 1963) theorize that one of the key ingredients to environmental harmony and inter-agency co-operation is the definition of organizational domain. One of the primary functions of an agency's environmental adaptation mechanisms must be the establishment of its own domain and the discovery of the domain aspired to by other agencies. In the systems context this is a boundary spanning role which attempts to reduce uncertainty in an organized environment, thereby making internal decision-making more reliable.

The two examples of potential domain overlap in the model are in the acquisition of resources and the delivery of outputs to clientele. Agencies in the social service sector obtain their inputs, primarily funding, but also to some extent voluntary and professional personnel, from similar sources in their community i.e. governments, service clubs, special interest groups. Similarly, there is likely to be a degree of overlap in the segment of the population they seek to serve. This is caused by the likelihood of multi-need families and individuals and different therapeutic approaches or values integrated into organizational goals. Different organizations find themselves treating different needs within the same family or treating similar needs at different times or with unique methods.

Agencies may also find themselves in a position of competing with others for the necessary environmental components, and if unsuccessful, perhaps need to reconsider their internal criteria and strategies if they are going to continue. The instability this and the social sanction against competition in the public sector pressures agencies to seek out domain consensus.

Domain consensus consists of three basic steps. First the agency must establish for itself the limits on its own domain. Second, the agency must participate in a process of discovering the domains sought by others. Third, the agencies must enter into negotiations and bargaining in order to carve up the resource and client pies in mutually acceptable patterns. This three-step process is necessarily an ongoing one given the dynamic state of the environment which may include from time to time the introduction of new agencies. While the first step is largely an internal process, the second and third may be facilitated by interagency forums of one type or another.

Comprehending the nature of another agency is not an easy task—especially when it is viewed as a potential competitor for resources. Levin et al (1963, pp. 1193) emphasize that this must be a comprehensive procedure if it is going to be of subsequent value in negotiating domain consensus. Agencies tend to rely on brief superficial descriptions contained in directories and lists. These documents are produced more for their public relations and marketing value than for promoting an understanding of an agency's goals and operations. The latter is considered necessary to successful and lasting inter-agency relationships. An inter-agency forum if it is going to succeed in facilitating domain consensus in a community must provide opportunities for the meaningful exchange of organizational values and philosophies.

Negotiation and bargaining can take place once mutual awareness has been achieved. One should not expect in a complex social environment, that this will be a process of limited duration. Agreement upon a shared approach to the distribution of resources and allocation of target populations is difficult enough to achieve in bilateral circumstances; a final conclusion is not a reasonable expectation in a social system with a multitude of agencies. Recognizing that negotiation is an ongoing process, an inter-agency organization can at best set as a goal for itself the provision for an ongoing relationship between agencies that facilitates the process.

The issues of power and control over access to resources are also critical to the functioning of an environment and the relationships between agencies. Hasenfeld and Tropman (1978) characterize this distribution of power as a political economy where agencies vary significantly in the amount they possess. Where organizations share a common pool of resources, for example a limited amount of government grant money, there is bound to be an unequal distribution between them. The pattern that this distribution assumes is derived from the unique stature and abilities of individual agencies. Those with a high degree of status as dictated by tradition, public support, size and previous success as well as those with sophisticated political skills are more likely to be more dominant. The manner in which these power relationships are managed is critical to the functioning of any inter-agency initiatives in a community.

There are two basic types of power relationships between organizations, and in fact within organizations. (Hasenfeld and Tropman, 1978). The first is vertical or hierarchal and is where authority and decision-making is centralized and flows down toward others at the will of those holding the power. The negotation of change or the maintenance of the distribution of power in this type of environment reverts, according to Hasenfeld and Tropman, to three different mechanisms. There are deliberate efforts to disrupt the structure through the use of threats, manipulation of the rules or conditions, and authoritative directions to conform to the will of those with power.

The second type of power relationship is lateral or horizontal.This is characterized by co-operative postures between agencies even if there exists between them unequal access to resources. Under these conditions bargaining and negotiation toward shared goals are the operative strategies. This is a preferred style if a community of social service agencies is going to be consistent with a human-relations style of interaction and an efficiency orientation.

That an inter-agency organization might be able to encourage a co-operative spirit in the relationships among its constituency is a noble but difficult task. However, there is a risk that an inter-agency organization can trivialize itself by concentrating on issues of relatively minor importance and not establishing for itself a goal of promoting a co-operative atmosphere in the exercise of power (Warren, 1977).

How an inter-agency group goes about achieving co-operation and co-ordination is also critical to its fulfillment of a meaningful role in the environment. The inter-agency organization must, like the other corporate members of a society, establish itself as an organization before carving out for itself a domain in the environment which is consistent with its goals and objectives. Chapter 2 dealt with the organization's problems of internal integration and its external adaptation issues (Schein, 1985). The means that it selects, however, to accomplish its goals are uniquely constrained by its inter-agency nature. This unique form of environmental activity, in order to maintain internal integrity, must develop goals in a manner that achieves consensus among members, thereby presumably being non-competitive with any. This requires that they be general enough to gain widespread acceptance but not be watered down to the extent that they are trivialized.

Co-ordination is a concept that is often associated with the role and inherent goals of inter-agency efforts but is also elusive in terms of definition. Hasenfeld and Tropman offer a simple definition in the context of inter-agency efforts:

> "Co-ordination occurs from our perspective, when an internal agent, such as a council, central bureau, inter-agency committee or the like, is set up to facilitate organizational interaction and activity." (1979, p. 274)

The process of multi-agency consultation and co-ordination is greatly simplified for each participant when it is facilitated by a common neutral organization. Co-ordination is attempted in one of two ways depending upon the philisophical model that dominates the environment. (Litwack and Rothman, (1971).

In an environment dominated by heirarchal relationships, instrumental forms of power and highly specialized functions co-ordination relies on the use of rules or other forms of regulation. This rationalistic model (Litwack and Rothman, 1971) is what one might expect in an institutional or traditional environment. In these environments co-ordination between specialized and somewhat independant systems is required and performed according to prescribed procedures. In order for an inter-agency organization to impose and enforce systematic control of this magnitude it must have achieved a level of authority and control that comes only from long-held tradition, control over resources, or exceptional success.

The more likely alternative in the social service community is the human-relations model (Litwack and Rothman, 1971). This model is characterized by an emphasis on: the generalist approach, collegial relations, and less structured decision-making (ibid, pp. 251). They conclude that the rationalistic model is more effective where tasks are more certain and predictable, while the human relations model is better in a less predictable environment. Co-ordination in the human-relationss philosophy is accomplished through mutual awareness and negotation and is more likely to be consistent with Rothman's model of Locality Development rather than Social Planning or Social Action (Rothman, 1968).

Inter-agency organizations in general should be conceived as natural outgrowths of a complex but basically humanistically based environment. Their basic purpose is to facilitate, through the most environmentally and organizationally appropriate means, a process whereby autonomous agencies can co-exist in a harmonious and efficient manner. These individual agencies by virtue of the fact that they exist in the same environment are likely to draw from common pools of resources and serve similar or the same clientele. In order for these agencies to achieve their individual goals, it is imperative that they gain a meaningful awareness of the domain of others and how their decisions impact upon the rest of the environment. Thus, while the means by which an inter-agency organization may choose to pursue environmental stability and an atmosphere where negotiation can occur, there is an implicit assumption that the promotion of co-ordination and co-operation are central to their purpose. It is also important that the inter-agency organization identify its own place in the array of agencies and establish a solid organization base for itself. It is thereby unique from other organizations in that it is legitimized and empowered by their will but is also, as an environmental unit, another actor in this complex community of relationships.

History of Inter-Agency Organizations in Red Deer

Since 1960 there have been three distinguishable organizations which could be accurately described as inter-agency in focus. While there have been many examples of co-operative initiatives in the ensuing period, they have tended to have a narrow focus and be ad hoc in structure. The three major organizations were unique in that they were large (i.e. 20-50 member agencies) formally structured and more enduring. The last of these three, the Red Deer Community Services Network, is still very active and in the focus of this case study. A brief look back at the two early efforts helps to put the Network into a historical perspective.

The Red Deer Social Planning Council:

This organization began under the name Red Deer Community Welfare Group in 1960. It began when "....a small group of interested individuals concerned themselves with unmet community needs." (Social Planning Council News Release, September 1966, Appendix III.) From 1960 until 1965 it was an informally structured collection of people, both lay and professional who "...undertook studies, prepared briefs and expressed concern about what was happening in their community." The Community Welfare Group took an active leadership role in the development of new services in the City including the Family Services Bureau, the Clothing Bank and Christmas Bureau. Another of the interesting activities that the Group planned were "community think-ins", where citizens were invited to come and express their concerns and identify areas of need. It was at one of these public meetings in 1961 that the group was first asked to study the concept of a social planning body. After some study, however, the Group decided in February of 1962 not to proceed with the idea. However, in the spring of 1965 the idea was raised again at a public meeting and with 46 different agencies represented the concept had enough impetus to develop. By June of that year the Community Welfare Group was calling itself the Social Planing Council of Red Deer and District.

The first constitution of this organization was adopted at a general meeting held January 31, 1966. It outlined the following objectives:

"(1) To promote the establishment and development of community services.

(2) To provide a vehicle and nucleus facilitating co-ordination and co-operation among social agencies.

(3) To research and evaluate social problems and resources with emphasis on planning for improved social services on all levels.

(4) To gather and disseminate information of social problems and needs,

  (a) to promote public awareness and understanding of them,

  (b) to make available to social agencies such information.

(5) To recruit suitable and capable individuals, both professional and voluntary to ensure leadership and personnel essential to the attainment of these objectives.

(6) To carry on such other activities in relation to the foregoing as may be deemed advisable.

The function of the Social Planning Council of Red Deer and District is to promote understanding of community needs, to evaluate social needs in the community and to plan how these needs can best be met. The Council will bring together representatives from public and private organizations in the field of health, welfare, education and recreation to study and apply their combined experience to attain and maintain the highest possible standards of community services."

Although these objectives appear to be general and unmeasurable, there were specific activities designed to meet them. Primarily the sub-committee structure was used to focus the interests and skills of particular agency personnel and citizens on social issues. The Council had, at one time in its history, seven standing committees and up to 17 short-term committees each dealing with a topical area which could be traced back to the objectives. One such example was a short-term committee formed to study the implications and potential of the Preventive Social Services program being proposed by the provincial government of the time. The Social Planning Council, with the work done by its committee, encouraged the City of Red Deer and its immediate municipal neighbours to join together in participating in this program. That initiative in 1966-1967 led to the development of the current Family and Community Support Services Board and Department which is a major funder of social programs and a community development agent. Other committees were involved in developmental activities related to: Family Life Education, Volunteer Bureau, Homemaker Services, Day Care, Aging, and others. Some of these came to fruition in terms of ongoing community services, others did not.

While the activities of the sub-committees appear to have been sufficient to sustain the Council until May of 1972, they all appear to have come to an end under this structure about that time. There is no documentation about what specifically, if anything, led to the demise of the Social Planning Council, although in retrospect it may not be that difficult to surmise. In particular, it may not have been what it failed to do, or keep doing, as much as it was that it did its job too well and perhaps was somewhat a victim of timing.

From a systems analysis, based upon information included in old correspondence, minute files, and interviews with participants in that process, the Council appears to have failed to meet its internal needs as a system itself. Its sub-systems, the sub-committees, became what could be labeled production sub-systems (Daft, 1986) which in effect produce services or outputs for the organization. (In this case they were providing specific planning and co-ordination services.) These sub-systems, in the case of those that grew to be service providers (eg. Homemaking), stopped looking to the Council for other system functions, such as boundary spanning, maintenance, adaptation and management, and instead developed sub-systems of their own. The service sub-committee or sub-system formed a formal organization of its own which the Council did not replace in its own system. Perhaps the most fatal of these examples was the emergence of the Red Deer and District Preventive Social Services Board which while it was encouraged by Council, began to assume some of its functions. The P.S.S. Board had the additional features of legislated authority and financial resources to implement its decision whereas the Council relied on the communal expertise of its membership. By 1972, however, this membership had eroded down to four individuals and had failed as a system to adapt to an environment which had became increasingly more complex.

The Inter-Agency Forum:

One of the last formal activities of the Social Planning Council was the sponsorship of a "Community Think-In". In May of 1971 one of these think-ins focused on the proposed integration of health and social services and with the input of 55 citizens led to the formation of a steering committee. This committee assumed the leadership for the development of the concept of integration and facilitation of agency co-operation to this end. Although there is no evidence of articulated terms of reference, purpose or goals, the organization had begun to refer to itself as the Inter Agency Forum. This process led to the ongoing inter-agency meetings which began formally in January of 1973. Over the period of the next 18 months this group, meeting monthly and averaging more than 21 people each time, began to structure itself. It did not however reach the extent of formalization i.e. incorporation, constitution, articulated purpose and goals, that the Social Planning Council had, but there was an apparent need among agency staff for the opportunities provided by the Forum. One effort in 1974 attempted to derive specific objectives for the group. This included descriptions of the Forum purpose as being: a means of community input, to create an AID service, to avoid duplication, to integrate agencies, to avoid neglected areas, to facilitate client input, to develop a community conscience and co-ordination (Appendix IV). These objectives, rather than being ritually adopted and forming the basis of future activity, appear to have been the product of a brainstorming event held at one of the meetings. There was no systematic follow through on developing subsequent strategies. Despite this obvious shortcoming, the Inter-Agency Forum continued to meet regularly and draw about 20 participants each time. The failure to implement a formalized planning process did not seem to inhibit the development of new programs and organizations in the City, eg. Red Deer Action Group for the Physically Disabled, Big Brothers, Big Sisters and Adult Day Centre. Although the actual contributions of the Forum in the rise of new programs is not clear, the minutes show that the organization did provide a facilitative role at the minimum by acting as a communications network. The Forum kept thorough minutes which included a "points of interest" section which kept participants informed of community and agency activities.

Consistent levels of participation in the Forum were sustained until the fall of 1976, four years after the steering committee had began, although the average attendance had shown signs of diminishing a year earlier. There are several expressions of disappointment throughout 1976 and early 1977 about the sagging interest. In October of 1976 another effort was made to review the purpose and identify roles for the Forum. These are not for the most part unlike those listed earlier, although the people are different from those who brainstormed in 1974. However, the organization was plagued by the same failure to come up with a plan to integrate any objectives into a process whereby they might be addressed with planned action. Meetings focused rather than on activities meaningfully related to their expressed potential involvements, on a series of "incestuous-like" presentations where participants would take turns explaining their recent projects. Attendance at meetings dropped off dramatically through the first half of 1977.

A final revitalization event was held in the tavern of a Red Deer Hotel in September of 1977 but a "sizeable number" of attendees seem to have held a wake instead. While plans came out of that meeting to get together four times a year thereafter, there are no records of subsequent meetings taking place.

Although the Inter-Agency Forum never achieved the formal status and the apparent project development accomplishments of the Social Planning Council, it did sustain itself for almost 70 meetings. The absence of formal structure and a precise planning process did not seem to be major inhibiting factors in the early and middle stages of this group's history.

While the forum sustained itself on its potential and the agency-centred interests of its participants which formed the basis for the emergence of a communal organization, it failed to take the next step into development. Awareness of a central purpose was achieved to a limited extent, although members seemed to share some common notions they did not undertake specific activities related to those they seemed to agree upon. In a systems perspective the Forum did not develop the means by which their ambitions would be realized. Shein notes that the process by which a group develops integrates and implements these means helps to resolve internal group issues (1985, pp. 59-60). The Inter-Agency Forum's failure to articulate its tasks contributed directly to the dissolution of its internal structure and ultimately its presence in the social services environment.

The Red Deer Community Services Network

The Network is the latest of Red Deer's inter-agency organizations and the object of the case study. Its history is relatively brief because it has been in existence a relatively short period of time but its present vibrance makes it quite accessible to observation and study.

There are no recorded attempts to organize social service agencies from the city-wide spectrum in the period between 1977 when the Inter-Agency Forum died and 1982. There were four meetings attempting to revitalize an interagency process beginning in February, 1982. The first meeting attracted twenty people from fourteen different agencies, a record which diminished in each successive meeting until only four individuals appeared for a meeting in June of 1982. Those four people, in a discouraged frame of mind, decided to postpone future meetings indefinitely.

In the summer of 1982 five individuals from different agencies met to discuss how an effective interagency organization could be developed without repeating the experience of earlier that year. This small group calling itself the Red Deer Interagency Development Committee initiated a process of leading such an organization to a point where it could become self-sustaining. Although this process was not elaborately documented, it was to begin with two fundamental steps. First was the agreement on a four-part purpose statement as follows:

(a) To function as a network of management and supervisory personnel representing various agencies/organizations who will advise and recommend projects and activities or seek the development of resources to serve the needs of the community.

(b) To actively review and respond to current issues which have impact on the social, educational and health needs of the community. Examples of these issues may include legislation and practices of the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments, as well as any event or situation which a majority of committee members deem appropriate for advocacy and address with the purpose of lobbying for change, providing support or seeking action on those issues or situations.

(c) To promote and facilitate professional development opportunities for the Board and staff of all member agencies on a cost shared basis.

(d) To serve as a forum for presentation and exchange of information on the on-going progress of member agencies.

The second step related to part C of the purpose involved the proposal for organizing four workshops for the staff and volunteers of potential members. In the proposal that was submitted to funders the committee outlined these workshops as the opportunity to provide worthwhile educational opportunities for agencies as well as demonstrating to participants the value of co-operative effort. The committee viewed the workshops as a deliberate strategy to involve agency personnel in an activity with direct tangible benefits but also to begin bringing people together for the pursuit of common interests. The strategy assumed that agencies having seen the value of the workshops first hand would be more inclined to work together toward the continuation of common action. The committee from the beginning considered this as being a slow long-term process.

The proposal for funding was successful; four workshops were held in 1983 and regular meetings began after the last workshop in November. The committee had grown to seventeen people who planned an organizational meeting for January of 1984. At that time twenty four people from eighteen 18 different city agencies developed a structure of subcommittees to follow through with planning activities for 1984 and considering the future form of the organization. This process resulted in: the planning of four more workshops in 1984, the election of a slate of executive officers, choice of the name Red Deer Community Services Network, endorsements of a number of "policies" and, an apparent group-will to survive.

In 1984 the Network planned and delivered three more workshops and a Christmas social event. It maintained accurate records and a mailing list which had grown to forty seven agencies by November. It averaged seventeen people at its nine meetings that year. Organizational costs were covered by the minimal membership fee that was collected while the deficit costs of the workshops were covered by event-type funding from the United Way and Family & Community Support Services.

In September of 1984 a decision was made to pursue ongoing funding for all organizational activities in 1985. These included more workshops, a major conference, sponsorship of a public debate and payment of costs related to maintaining the group. In the past individual agencies had absorbed the costs of printing and mailing for example, and not wishing to overburden any members, the Network chose to reimburse non-personnel expenses. The Network received approval for its 1985 funding need from Family and Community Support Services. In 1985 the Network accomplished all of its planned activities and averaged twenty four people at each of its ten meetings. Participation by members was dispersed among the wide variety of tasks associated with organizing these events. The Network utilized a subcommittee structure to meet the demand on organization resources. While most of these subcommittees met on an ad hoc basis, one standing committee was established to deal with issues related to volunteerism. At the end of 1985 the Network established several more ongoing committees to each take responsibility for the planning and implementation of events in 1986. There was also a complete turnover in the executive committee when the new year began in January.

The regular monthly meetings of the Network tend to have a more instrumental or business orientation combined with structured opportunities for agencies to share news. Most of the actual planning and organization occurs at the committee level although the meetings include formalized endorsement or modification of the suggestions and work of the committees. Although the monthly meetings play an important role in the organization, they are not the exclusive focus or motivation for continued member involvement.

In the almost three years that have passed in the Network's history since the original four part purpose was composed by the Development Committee, there has not been a review or evaluation of organizational goals. Similarly there has not been any reconsideration of the policies adopted in June 1983.

Methology

The purpose of this case study is to determine the extent to which the Red Deer Community Service Network, as an organization engages the community development process and thereby increases its resistance to organizational entropy. While it is not possible to ascertain the definitive reasons why the Social Planning Council and the Inter-Agency Forum succumbed to entropic tendencies, it is possible to be more specific about the community development process qualities of the Network. The basic principles outlined at the end of chapter 2 form the basis of a questionnaire which was administered to Network participants. The extent to which members confirm that the organization has adopted these principles either deliberately or inadvertently, contributes to conclusions about the Network's effectiveness as an organization. The questionnaire further tests member's perception of effectiveness relative to change in its environment. The two group impressions taken together will to ascertain whether or not group effectiveness is attributable to those principles. This thesis is not concerned as much about why or if the organization is continuing as whether or not those reasons are related to the principles of the community development process identified earlier.

The outcomes of the questionnaire are combined with the practices and procedures of the Network provided by the record documents to draw conclusions about its nature. These conclusions, while focusing on the community development process aspects of the organization, provides some insight about the future prospects for the group's continuation.

Questionnaire

Dillman (1977) identifies four different kinds of information that questionnaires can elicit from respondents. Of these four: attitudes, beliefs, behaviour and attributes, the latter three are sought from Network members via a questionnaire. Beliefs are the most numerous type of question in this case while behaviour and attitude factors are more supplementary in nature.

The belief questions on this survey attempts to find out what participants think about various aspects of the Network. No implication about what is right or wrong is associated with the response to any of these issues, but the results show the extent to which group congruity has emerged.

The behaviour questions seek to discover the actions of individuals as they relate to the Network. It is important to assess the level of participation and commitment to confirm that the questions about beliefs are valid representations of the group.

Attribute questions ask respondants to provide information about themselves so that the group as a whole can be characterized. These, like behaviour characteristics, also allow some belief questions to be compared two-dimensionally with the attributes of respondants. For example, it may be that people who have been involved longer or more intensely believe differently about things related to Network functioning than do more recently joined or relatively uninvolved members.

Except for the first three belief/behaviour type questions, the questionnaire is composed of a series of Likert-type scale questions which ellicit rankings on various aspects of Network functioning. The questionnaire is adapted from Schein's 1969 text on Process Consultation. The principle behind obtaining this type of data, which is all ordinal in nature, is to add a degree of self-determined assessment on the level of organization present in the Network. This data provides only an enrichment of the overall study of the Network case and is not used to prove or disprove theory.

The data analysis is limited by the type of data to simple descriptive statistics and non-parametic tests. These are sufficient, however, for the discussion and conclusions about the organizational qualities of the Network as viewed by the members. The extent to which there is agreement about rank among members and the actual average rank helps establish the degree of organizational culture that has developed and the presence of the community development process. As discussed in chapter two, the integral essence of these two concepts permits their simultaneous measurement.

In the scale-response questions, the rank order of answers is always in the same direction. That is, the lowest or poorest rank is an answer of 1. in each case while the optimum rank is an answer of 7. The manner in which the individual questions address particular organizational and community development principles is outlined in detail below. As average is a ranked choice of 4 for each question, a final analysis which compares the group ranked average relative to the nominal average provides an indication of the Network's achievement on a principle by principle basis. Subsequently, a review of the whole set of questions provides a quantitative but subjectively interpreted analysis of the summary position of the Network relative to the overall optimum i.e. an average ranking of 7 on all ten factors: —

FACTOR I - COMMUNICATION

1. COMMUNICATION:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Poor internal communication Few opportunities			Average			Well developed communication between and among participants.

Effective communication in an organization is essential primarily to its internal functioning. If a community is going to emerge as the context for development, awareness of the issues must be achieved and consensus reached. Also, in order for it to achieve an organized status and thus an appropriate context/agent for development activities there needs to be the joint establishment of purpose and goals. These must be evaluated and correction integrated into subsequent activity. All of these group tasks require that individuals be able to communicate and do so in a manner that all feel as though they have equal access to the group. Thus, while a basic ability to interact via a common language is necessary in order to do initial testing of assumptions and values, the group process and leadership must facilitate an ongoing opportunity for members to develop a mutual conception of themselves and their role in the environment. Some groups establish unique internal system of communication such as with jargon or group symbolism, which differentiates the group from others and promotes membership identification (Schein, p. 69).

FACTOR 2 - IDENTITY

2. IDENTITY:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7
Boundary between who is in the Network and who is not very unclear, or not present.						Organizational boundaries clear Easy to tell who is a part of Network, who is not.

Knowing who is included in the group and who is not is one of the most important factors in group development. As discussed in the discussion of community in Chapter Two, it has been one that is the most neglected in community development literature. Because it is difficult to articulate in many communities where humanitarian principles are being pursued, and there is a reluctance to be obviously excluding some people, communities have been defined, by default, as having territorial boundaries. Inclusion is defined by what side of the street or river or imaginary line that one lives in. While this is too limiting and impractical, as discussed earlier, it does recognize the group need to be able to feel the security and sense of identity that comes with knowing who fellow members are or are not.

FACTOR 3 - LEADERSHIP

3. LEADERSHIP:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Group need for leadership unmet or too concentra-						Leadership needs met and evenly distributed.

This particular factor addresses how a group feels about and deals with its internal need for leadership as it applies to the distribution of status power and authority. While all members feel individual needs for power and status (Schein, pp. 72) the means by which it is shared among them or could be is more important than who actually possesses it at any given time. As discussed in the section on interagency dynamics, a horizontal pattern of power relationships where members perceive roughly equal access to the decision-making process, is considered an effective organizational posture. This is also true of community development strategies where community members are considered as equal and the opportunity for participation by all is a gooverning assumption. This factor also assumes that a group recognizes its own needs for leadership from certain other members, perhaps on a dynamic basis or perhaps concentrated on a simple charasmatic individual; commitment to a particular style of group process and activities is related more to an organization's goals and objectives than to the will and values of the leadership whose primary responsibility is rather the maintenance of group culture.

FACTOR 4 - COHESION

4. COHESION:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Members distrustful and non-sharing. Atmosphere Unfriendly.						Optimal cohesion feelings of trust Respect & Friendliness.

The group's need to establish internal feelings of trust, friendship and respect is referred to in this factor as cohesion. Organizational theory and community development both recognize that in order for the bonds between members to strengthen, there must be opportunities for people to develop these feelings. While some formal organizations choose to omit or ignore this factor, it is essential that group norms be established that enhance the human relationship as well as the task-related connection between members.

FACTOR 5 - UNIQUENESS AND MEANING

5. UNIQUENESS AND MEANING:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No sense of meaning or group spirit.					Group unique meaningful. Spirit obvious and shared.	

This is a difficult notion to explain and to identify in an organization. Schein notes that

> "Organizations are capable of developing the equivalent of religion and/or ideology based on the manner in which critical events are managed." (p. 80)

In every group challenges arise for which there may be no immediately obvious or discernable explanation or solution. Groups, if they are to survive, need to develop and integrate a sense of meaning and spirit which sustains them in the face of events over which they may feel powerless. Occurences such as this may be met in a group's early status with either withdrawal or disolution, or with a strong internal sense of meaning and spirit which holds the challenge in abeyance until internal resources or mechanism can be marshalled to meet it. More mature groups as they meet and overcome these outside challenges develop a sense of tradition and confidence which becomes a group ideology and makes it a powerful entity in the environment.

FACTOR 6 - DECISION-MAKING

6. DECISION-MAKING:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Group indecisive decisions made by few, no opportunities for share in decisions.					Consensus sought and tested, high degree of participation in decision-making process.	

In order for an organization to become fully integrated and begin its activities in the environment, it must have first established a means by which decisions are made. This is critical to each of the previous five factors in that none of them will have reached its optimal state until the group is able to reach the point of consulting the opinions of all members and determining a unified position. If the group takes actions which reflect the will of only a few, long term viability of the organization is doubtful. Those who feel unconsulted or ignored will withdraw support. Although this is an obvious and easily understood condition of success in a community, most find it difficult to achieve the optimal state.

The next four factors refer to the organization's relationship with its environment. Once an organization has achieved a degree of internal integration, it is prepared to undertake activities which may appear to be internal in nature actually give direction and meaning to this relationship.

FACTOR 7 - PURPOSE AND GOALS

7. PURPOSE AND GOALS:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Confused, diverse conflicting, unclear.					Clear to all, shared and accepted organizational activities are consistent with goals.	

Not only must the group reach a decision about why it exists but it must have achieved a membership wide comprehension of this. A group may consider this to be obvious and common sense but inherent in any such assumptions is the weakness that it may in fact be wrong or not as "common" as presumed. The process by which consensus and clarity is achieved is important to the groups internal operations but a unified sense of purpose is also critical to those who represent the organization in the environment. The planning and implementation of groups activities is intimately connected to the communal sense of purpose and related goals. If goals and purpose are not clear or consensually endorsed, the organization's identity is invalidated as those outside the boundaries become confused. The internal structure is greatly destabilized as well.

FACTOR 8 - ACTIVITIES

8. ACTIVITIES:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ineffective, unrelated to goals, not						Effective, Goal-related, meaningful.

Activities are the environmentally obvious manifestations of a group's purpose. If an organization is going to affect change in its social environment, it must initiate actions which are the product of an internal planning process. These should be consistent with its articulated goals and be designed to achieve a measurable objective.

FACTOR 9 - FEEDBACK

9. FEEDBACK:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No means of receiving feedback on group functioning or activities. Feedback not integrated into subsequent decisions.						Feedback facilitated or integrated

The planning process must include the provision for activities to be measured against their predetermined outcomes. This measurement should be established beforehand but does not necessarily imply an objective or empirical assessment. The principle is to reach a conclusion about the effectiveness of a group activities relative to the investment of of its resources. This conclusion needs to be integrated into subsequent group decisions and corrections made if necessary.

FACTOR 10 - CREATIVITY AND GROWTH

10. CREATIVITY AND GROWTH:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Members and group in a rut; operate routinely; persons stereotyped and rigid in their roles no progress.						Group flexible seeks new and better ways; individuals changing and growing; creative individually supported.

If an organization is ultimately successful in achieving its goals and objectives and there are no changes to these, it is reasonable to expect that it will change and grow. The integration of feedback provides one means by which this growth can be directed and facilitated but the internal functioning of the group must provide for the dynamic state of group process. Thus, there must be an atmosphere whereby members are encouraged in the participation and creativity as it relates to their contribution to the organization.

Results by Individual Factor

The questionaire was administered to all of those attending the February, 1985 meeting of the Network. Those attending for the first time that day or guests were asked not to complete the questionaire. The instrument was then distributed to several individuals who were not at the February meeting but who have been regular participants. The result was that 25 people completed the form, which is about the average number of regular participants based on a review of the minutes over the last year.

Of the 25 completions, over half (56%) were from people who had been involved for more than a year and 60 per cent had been involved in planning and organizational activities for the Network. Only 4 of those completing had been involved less than three months, while only 6 said that they attended meetings only.

This combination of respondants is considered to be an accurate reflection of the organization. The scores should therefore be considered as quite an accurate account of the views of membership relative to the characteristics being tested. While there always exists some potential risk of the Halo Effect on a result of the strong positive feelings about the organization, the specificity and clarity of the extremes on the scale questions should have minimized this. This assumption is validated by the lack of central tendency in the scores which often reflects a degree of uncertainty or unfamiliarity. In fact, the combined scores demonstrate an absence of central tendency ($m = 5.308$). Thus, there should be confidence that the instrument is a reliable and valid source of information about the Network.

Table 1 shows the mean and mode scores for each of the 10 characteristics related to the Network's organizational culture.

Table 1

Ratings of Factors
Red Deer Community Services Network

CHARACTERISTIC	MODE	MEAN
Communication	5.0	5.16
Identity	5.0	4.28
Leadership	5.0	5.16
Cohesion	6.0	5.68
Uniqueness	5.0	5.24
Purpose and Goals	5.0	4.92
Decision Making	5.0	5.40
Activities	6.0	5.92
Feedback	6.0	5.68
Creativity	6.0	5.64
TOTAL	6.0	5.31

The maximum possible score in all scales was 7 and minimum 1, with a theoretical average of 4.0. In fact the results show that the average score was over 4.0 in each of the 10 characteristics and as high as 5.92. The real average for all ten characteristics was 5.31, well above the expected and the modal score was 6.0 placing the cummulative account nearer to the maximum than to the theoretical average. The overall interpretation of these results must be that participants believe that each of these characteristics exist in a positive manner in the organization.

An even greater insight into the organization is provided when the results of the survey are considered one characteristic at a time. For the items Cohesion, Activities and Creativity, there were no ratings at all lower than a 4.0, while all of the others have some, if relatively small, measure of negativism. When considered individually, the scales provide important information about the nature of the organization's strengths and weaknesses.

Communication

Communication, as critical as it is to organizational development and process, scored as one of the lower of all averages. Below the actual average for all 10 factors. While still above the theoretical average (only 2 of 25 rated below 4.0) there is reason to believe that the organization is still far from optimal in terms of the communication between and among participants. This is further reflected in, and perhaps linked, to the relatively poor marks afforded Factor 7 - Purpose and Goals. Discussions related to the development of group purpose and goals contribute to growth and clarification in the system of communication. Perhaps the failure to articulate and re-evaluate the group's purpose, relying instead upon an assumption of unified purpose, leads to lazy habits in communication.

Identity

Identity was the lowest scoring of all factors, being rated on average at more than 1 full rating point below the total average and just barely above the theoretical average. There were in fact 32 per cent of the respondants who rated the network at 3.0 or below and it was the only factor to receive a 1.0 rating by anybody. It also had one respondent rate the Network's Identity factor at 7 or optimal. The relatively low average score reflects a degree of confusion about the boundaries of the organization among many members. It is difficult at times for people to know who is and who is not a fellow member. While the data does not provide information on the possible causes of this ambiguity, it seems reasonable to associate the lower score with those for Communication and Purpose and Goals. This cluster of factors rely upon a concentration of organizational effort to achieve a by inadequate communication and poor or dated purpose and goals. The frequency of new faces at the monthly meetings is also undoubtedly contributing to a sense of ambiguity as to who belongs and who, if anybody, does not. The relative informality about how business is conducted and recorded would also promote an impression that the boundaries, if present, are not enforced by statutory control or leadership authority. In particular, on the rare occasion where a resolution would be moved and voted upon, there is no clear record maintained about who is eligible to vote and who may not. Although the organization tends to operate by consensus (there is no record of a split vote on any issue), there is a policy which restricts voting privileges to one vote per agency and only to those agencies who have paid their annual fee. This policy is not, however, strictly adhered to and would not likely enter into the resolution of a conflict unless other less formal forms of negotiation had failed. Thus, it is not surprising that Identity, when measured by the ability to distinguish between members and non-members, resulted in some degree of doubt. The Network in fact seems to tacitly encourage a degree of ambiguity as a means of not wishing to be, or appear to be, exclusive of any individual or organization. This is evident from the rather passive approach to membership enforcement, where people attending meetings are encouraged to join by paying their $10.00 annual fee but are not admonished or restricted from involvement if they do not.

The real obscurity of organizational boundaries lies, however, in a more fundamental weakness of the organization; a weakness that is inherent in the nature of inter-agency organizations. There has never been an attempt to resolve the unspoken questions about where Network begins and where its constituency stops. There is some doubt as to and board directors are members implicity, with appointed representatives, or whether individuals attend having assumed some degree of representative authority. These individuals may in fact be serving a boundary spanning role for their own organization/employer, with their involvement in Network affairs being a means of accomplishing the goals of their employer rather than from a commitment to the organizational goals of the Network. It is not possible in the context of this discussion to provide any validating data to support this possibility but it is possible to note that there has been no effort on the part of the Network to clarify the expectations of its members relative to that of their own agency. In fact to undertake such an exercise would probably require an excessive amount of time and energy and be fraught with organizational-threatening dynamics as well. The Network's very existence depends upon its ability to remain non-threatening to other organizations by not presuming to speak for its members as a whole on issues where conflicting postures are possible. It cannot obviously be seen to be supportive of all agencies if in taking a stand on a particular issue it is put into a position of opposing on a member.

There is another inherent problem in the achievement of a clear identity for an interagency organization. The organizational boundaries are unclear because the environment in which it exists is so unclear. The Network has never clearly defined from where it is going to draw its resources and to whom it is going to deliver its outputs. The name suggests an obvious geographic limitation and although there is an obvious human-services focus as well, even this is not defined by the original 4-part statement of purpose. Thus, the boundaries of the organization may be difficult to discern because there is no reference point for the environment in which it is supposed to exist. Both the environment and the organization may appear to some to vary from time to time, making it difficult for one to identify on an ongoing basis where they exist as an individual relative to these boundaries.

There may be reason to question the short term value of clearly discernible organizational boundaries. As mentioned earlier, there is almost a passive encouragement among Network participants of the "floating membership" approach. It allows individuals to use the forum it provides while not committing them to anything which: 1) may conflict with the goals of their own organization 2) may absorb some of their own resources or those for which they compete in the environment or 3) may develop a focus that lies outside that of their own purpose. A non-defined identity also can be successful in promoting a sense of general welcome which does not exclude anyone on any basis. The benefits of these approaches tend, however, to be relatively immediate in the promotion of a new organization. They provide the lure to something that promises more substance in the long term. If the organization is going to endure, it must provide members with a sense of identity which is at once not threatening and strong. A sense of commitment, pride and ownership in the Network as a clear and distinct organization must emerge if it is to succeed in survival where its predecessors atrophied.

Leadership

The leadership of the Network was rated positively with 76 per cent of respondants scoring it at 5.0 or above, 5 being the modal score. This question was oriented on the perception of the group to both the organizational need for leadership and the appropriateness of style. There is no distinction possible relative to these two sub-issues but the overall positive score is presumed to address both in equal measure.

The community development approach emphasizes a horizontal or participatory style in sharing power and leadership. The structure and practice of the Network appears to practice such a style. Although there was a trio of members who acted as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer for the first year and a half, there was organization-wide participation in the planning and development of the many activities that took place in that period. A system of subcommittees took on primary responsibility for the delivery of these activities, involving in each case a degree of participation and leadership on the part of subcommittee members. This style forces on each member a role requiring direct involvement and in a specific subject area in which they have some interest and expertise, while not compelling anyone to assume larger organizational leadership if they are unprepared or unwilling.

This style of leadership by the executive and endorsed by the participants reflects a commitment to a democratic and participatory spirit. This is also a style which is compatible with the nature of the organization in that a concentration of power and status would ultimately be perceived as threatening to individual members. Concern could legitimately arise that a leader could focus the resources and purposes of the Network in a manner which favour his employers, either deliberately or innocently, over that of Network as a collection. A participatory or shared leadership approach is also the best in terms of simple practicality. Concentrated leadership would involve an onerous allocation of personal time and energy from people whose primary commitment remains to their own agency. An excessive expenditure by an individual would not likely be justifiable for an employee of a non-profit or government agency.

Cohesion

Cohesion was among the highest rated of factors, scoring a mean of 5.68 and a model group of 6.0. This, at the superficial level, may be somewhat surprising given the less favourable score for Identity and an assumption that for cohesion to develop a sense of identity must be present.

It should first be noted, however, that Identity did not score poorly overall, only somewhat less well than the others.

Cohesion in this context refers to feelings of trust, respect and friendliness among participants. The fact that these are reportedly present is perhaps more a reflection of a deliberate short term strategy by Network founders than [illegible] universal goodwill. The attitude of non-exclusiveness and informality are responsible in part for these feelings which were encouraged as a means of "selling" the concept of interagency co-operation. The assumption being that if individuals can develop trust and friendship with others with similar (and even competitive) interests; the foundation will have been laid for more meaningful and lasting forms of co-operation. It is easier to accomplish mutually defined objectives if you trust and like your partners.

It is difficult to ascertain the reasons for the relative success of this organizational factor. However, it is likely that the democratic leadership style and the participatory approach to assuming responsibilities has contributed. The atmosphere of the monthly meetings also tends to be open and laced with informal humor and personal, rather than status references to others. Most participants refer to and address each other by first names.

The strength of the cohesion factor should give the organization some hope that the potential problems with identity can be overcome.

Uniqueness and Meaning

This factor attempted to ascertain the feelings of respondents about the meaningfulness and spirit of the Network. Scores on this factor were about average relative to the other factors and above the theoretical average. The modal score was 5.0.

This is a rather obscure aspect of organizational culture to attempt to measure. It is something, according to definition, that remains submerged in an organization until such time as a significant event arouses its presence. It then emerges in the form of energy, or some other manifestation of organization competence, to meet the challenge or explain the group's emotional response.

The Red Deer Community Services Network has not experienced events such as this often enough to be aware of or perhaps to have fully developed such a spirit. The single most moving event occurred at the conclusion of the conference that the Network organized in the Fall of 1985. This event, representing the culmination of months of planning, risk-taking and gratifying success, perhaps represents an example of the meaning of this concept, and suggests that it remains present in the culture of the Network awaiting the need to re-assert its value.

Decision-Making

Decision making was another of the categories that was rated about average relative to the scores of the others. Its average of 5.4 and mode of 5.0 left it in the middle of the pack.

That this factor did not score higher is perhaps explained by the very similar scores achieved by those most related, especially Communication and Leadership (these both scored averages of 5.16). The method employed in reaching the decisions necessary for both internal organizational integrity and environmental relationships is very dependant upon effective internal communications and management of the process by the leadership. According to the scale optimal decision making involves a commitment to consensus and a high degree of participation. Observations of Network meetings have shown that most decisions take place in subcommittees with recommendations that are forthcoming from them or the executive rarely challenged or questioned by the membership. Members appear to always be given opportunity to respond or participate in decision oriented discussions by the chairman and the absence of any overt reaction is obviously frustrating to those making proposals. This dearth of meeting participation in decisions may be associated with a high degree of trust or confidence in the process (as reflected by the high score for cohesion) or by the more practical objective of all participants to conclude Network business in one hour once per month. This time constraint is remarkably well [illegible] and may [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to meeting participation.

This is not to suggest that decisions are avoided or made poorly. The elaborate structure of standing and ad hoc subcommittees refocuses the bulk of decisions to these smaller subgroups of Network members. Thus, there would be general awareness among participants, most of whom participate in one or more of the subcommittees, of the decision making process involved in these groups. As a consequence, when recommendations are presented to the whole group by one of the subcommittees there would be general awareness ~~of the~~ process undertaken to reach that point and consensual endorsement might be confused with apathy.

Overall, there is an apparent need to clarify the decision making process especially in light of the similar scores recorded for the associated factors communication and leadership.

Purpose and Goals

This factor scored the second lowest average among all factors and was the only one other than Identity to score below 5.0. Although this average at 4.92 was still almost a full point above the theoretic average of 4.0 and the modal group was 5.0, the mediocre score on this most critical of factors should be cause for concern.

The original four part purpose statement gave some direction to the originators of the Network but their ongoing value has to be questioned. There is no record of any subsequent endorsement or even review of these by subsequent and significantly different, in terms of composition, Network membership. Those rating the organization on this factor were not prepared to label the purpose and goals as confused, [illegible] to identify them as optimal. This leads one to the conclusion that although it is likely that most participants would be unaware of the recorded purpose of the organization, most also assume that they must exist, and that they probably have some conception about their nature. This is perhaps more as a result of a deductive process about inter-agency organizations in general, instead of a deliberate internal process of goal clarification. Thus, most members can feel some confidence that their purpose for being a member of this organization is not unlike that of another fellow member.

If members are maintaining their involvement on the basis of an assumption, there must be some reinforcement of these assumptions coming from somewhere and their individual goals for participation must be being met. This reinforcement comes logically from two places. The first possibility rests with the strength of concentrated and charismatic leadership, which carries the organization along on the strength of individual passion. The second possibility, and the more likely in this case, lies with the success of the activities which the Network plans and delivers to its environment. This aspect of the organization is discussed in more detail in the next section but the score on activities was the highest of any, and therein may lie the interim substitute for a clear group sense of purpose and goals.

The sustainment of the organization without attention to its purpose will depend upon an alternative source of direction. An extra-ordinary degree of dependence upon the charismatic will of an individual results in failure if the individual for some reason falters or departs. Similarly, undue reliance upon continued success of the organization's activities for reinforcement puts the consequence of [illegible] the organization as a whole. This dependence upon the group's activities to give it meaning has the more subtle inherent threat of confusing those outside the organization. Outsiders become cautious and distrustful of something which they see as active but without direction, as if it is only a matter of time before it blunders into a collision.

The original strategy of the Network founders seems now to be on the verge of being too successful. The concept of concentrating on activities as a means of giving something concrete and meaningful to potential participants to relate to while having them experience the value of co-operative effort has now outgrown its usefulness. The seduction seems to have succeeded; now there needs to be attention paid to the long term meaning of the relationship.

Activities

As noted above, this was the best rated of all factors, scoring an average 5.92. There were no ratings below 5.0 and 20 of the 25 raters gave this a score of 6.0 or 7.0.

In the context of ideal organizational development activities are the means by which goals are achieved and by which purpose is manifest in the community. While there are specific objectives associated with the individual activities, like the number attending and their satisfaction, the ultimate mission of environmental activities is the achievement of corporate goals. The relative success of the Network in the planning and delivery of activities therefore, suggests a degree of perceived competence in this area, while the poorer score in Purpose and Goals questions the longer term organizational implications of them. Thus, the purpose of the activities while [illegible] [illegible] and specific positive results, may or may not be accomplishing the greater goals of the group. The nature of the scale did not determine this, and although the optimal score position for Activities includes the concept of the activities being "Goal-related and meaningful", there is no questionaire data to evaluate the relationship between Activities and achievement of corporate goals.

The most important aspect of the high ratings on this factor is the development of group culture that is necessary to accomplish it. While organizational purpose and goals did not receive as high marks, the importance of the activities implies that some direction is being given and that organizational resources and environmental inputs are being marshalled and applied in a successful manner. Some groups are successful in conceptualizing their philosophy and clearly articulating their purpose and goals without having the means by which activities can be implemented to address them.

The Network's activities are clearly its strength as perceived by the members but underlying success in this area is a structure which facilitates their delivery in the environment.

Feedback

This factor also scored highly. The average of 5.68 tied with Cohesion as the second highest among all 10 factors.

The optimal score for this factor was described as having feedback facilitated or integrated. Ordered as it was immediately following Activities, there may have been an assumption that this referred primarily to evaluative feedback on the individual activities. The evaluative process that each subcommittee undertakes [illegible] to its activities, as well as its report to the whole group, would be something that most members would be very familiar with. It also is further evidence of the internal structures referred to above which give the organization strength and respect.

There is, however, no record of a more global approach to organizational review and introspection. Nor does there appear a record of discussion about expected standards or achievements that are the result of an organizational process but which would apply to individual sub-groups and planned activities. Thus, like the purpose and goals, the organization seems to continue feeling successful more as a result of their collective assumptions rather than specific articulated expectations.

Creativity and Growth

This factor also scored relatively high with an average of 5.6 and 6.0 being the modal rating.

These results suggest that members consider the organization to be effective in supporting individuals in their creativity. The diversity and number of activities that the Network is involved in provides substantial opportunity for members to pursue specific interests. This diversity may also be contributing to the lack of clarity about identity, the purpose and goals. With the Network planning workshops, debates and conferences with varying general themes, and without a consistent and frequent refocus on the organizational purpose, there is reason to believe that the strength of the Creativity factor is reflecting negatively on some of the others. An involvement in an assortment of activities puts extra emphasis upon the group's other internal processes, in particular Communication and Purpose and Goals.

Reference is also made in this factor to flexibility and growth. Again, the diversity of activities is likely to reflect a positive rating regarding group flexibility. Although there are some consistent qualities about how the activities are planned and delivered (i.e. fees are consistently low, the museum and library are often the location, speakers are usually from the province and paid a minimal honorarium) these tend to be instrumental issues and the topics and planning committees vary considerably. This and the follow-up discussions at general meetings are undoubtedly being viewed as "flexibility".

The issue of growth is more difficult to explain. While there is likely to be an immediate assumption at first glance, that growth refers to the number of members when in fact the instrument refers more ssspecifically to an opportunity for individual growth. The nature of Network events tend to be oriented toward improving individual competencies through "training" type opportunities and thus could be contributing toward professional growth. The other form of growth which appears to take place in the Network is of an inter-personal nature. In keeping with the name and the concept of interagency organizations there is an inevitable growth in the relationships between individuals who, while working for independent agencies, are thrust into working relationships with one another around Network events. These working relationships undoubtedly spill over into other contacts that individuals have with one another outside of their mutual commitment to their common organization. Presumably their own organizational objectives are thereby enhanced.

Comparisons between Respondent Type

The results of the rating scales were also subjected to further analysis which compared the differences between:

(a) those who had been involved in the Network for less than 12 months, to those who had been involved longer;

(b) those whose involvement was restricted to attendance at meetings and events to those who participated in the planning and organizing;

(c) those who identify themselves as the chief executives of their organization and those who do not.

The purpose of these comparisons was to determine whether or not the degree of nvolvement in the organization, as measured by both length and type of this involvement, resulted in significantly differenttt ratings. The hypothesis in this case is that those whose involvement was greater would rate the organization higher. This is based on the assumption that they would have been exposed, over a longer duration and more intensely to the benefits of their membership and appreciate to a greater degree the cultural elements of the organization.

For the most part, this in fact happened and the hypothesis is supported. Of the twenty possible comparisons, nineteen showed greater averages for those who had greater involvements, ten of these over .5 of a grade larger.

Table 2

Comparison of Averages
Length of Involvement by Factor

	Less than 12 months	Greater than 12 months	Difference
Communication	4.64	5.29	.65
Identity	4.45	4.14	.31
Leadership	4.82	5.43	.61
Cohesion	5.55	5.79	.24
Uniqueness and Meaning	5.00	5.43	.43
Decision-Making	5.00	5.71	.71
Purpose and Goals	4.73	5.07	.34
Activities	5.63	6.14	.51
Feedback	5.64	5.71	.07
Creativity	5.18	6.00	.82

Overall average 5.31

Table 3
Comparison of Averages
Extent of Involvement by Factor

	MEETING ONLY	PLAN & ORGANIZE	DIFFERENCE
Communication	4.9	5.33	.43
Identity	4.1	4.40	.30
Leadership	4.7	5.47	.77
Cohesion	5.4	5.87	.47
Uniqueness and Meaning	4.9	5.47	.57
Decision-Making	5.0	5.67	.67
Purpose and Goals	4.8	5.00	.20
Activities	5.5	6.20	.70
Feedback	5.6	5.73	.13
Creativity	5.1	6.00	.90

One factor, Identity, resulted in an opposite result which is not surprising given the nature of this particular characteristic. One might expect that newcomers would not be fully aware of the boundary between membership and non-membership as it may be defined by either an informal or formal border. Having not encountered any quasi cermonial event which marked their crossing, they may be anticipating its eventual arrival. Long standing members are more aware of the fact that such clear boundaries do not exist.

There were four factors where more involved members were consistently more positive in their rating. Communication, Leadership, Decision-making and Creativity all resulted in scores of more than 0.5 of a grade greater for the groups that had been involved longer and in planning.

One might expect that Communication would score significantly better for those whom the opportunities to do so were greater. By virtue of their more extensive involvement it should be expected that they would have seen each other more often, this interaction facilitating familiarity and fostering better communication between these members at last.

The combination of Leadership and Decision-making makes sense because of the fact that they are both related to internal organizational process. Their higher rating from the more involved members may be attributed to more familiarity with the cultural responses inherent in this process. They would be more acquainted with the conventions and norms of the Network whereas those who were relatively new may not be aware of the historical developments or more subtle factors affecting decision making and authority. This is similar to the more complex issues affecting societies where cultural norms provide an almost automatic guidance to the course of social events. Guidance which occasionally eludes the understanding of visitors and new-comers. This effect is emphasized by the scale and newness of the individual organization where those who have been involved from near the beginning have had a significant influence upon the development of these cultural responses. Whether this influence was deliberate or a natural consequence of group process is unimportant to the newcomer who is more likely to be cautious in an unknown setting. It is logical that their discomfort with the process would be reflected in lower ratings.

An explanation for the large difference in the ratings for Creativity and Growth is also apparent. This difference was the largest for any factor, being almost a full grade greater. This factor, more than any other, refers to change over time. The ones with the most experience with the Network would be more qualified to assess any change. Further, the amount of growth experienced by some who have been involved for a longer period is almost inevitably bound to be greater. They would have also been exposed to a larger number of creative opportunities.

The other variable by which respondents were compared deals with whether or not they were the chief executive of their own organization. Of the twenty five respondents, eight identified themselves as such. This attribute was asked to test the assumption that chief executives would be more critical of the Network.

While the cause of any difference cannot be fully ascertained with the type of data that was gathered, it is not unreasonable to expect that people who have reached higher levels of authority in their own organization would have different expectations of another and therefore be harsher judges of its cultural characteristics. Table 4 shows that this in fact was the case for exactly half of the factors while on the other half they rated higher than non-executives. In all but two factors the variance was relatively small. The assumption then is not borne out by the results. Executives who participated in the survey did not differ significantly from non-executives.

Table 4

Comparison of Averages
Executives and Non-Executives by Factor

	EXECUTIVES	NON-EXECUTIVES	DIFFERENCE
Communication	5.13	4.82	-.31
Identity	4.00	4.41	.41
Leadership	5.00	5.24	.24
Cohesion	5.63	5.71	.08
Uniqueness	5.25	5.24	-.01
Decision Making	5.38	5.41	.03
Purpose and Goals	4.13	5.29	1.16
Activities	6.00	5.88	-.12
Feedback	5.88	5.59	-.29
Creativity	6.13	5.41	-.72

Summary

Inter-agency organizations, like their constituent members, exist in complex social environmentsm which both enables and constrains the organization's activities. The environment provides the resources which are transformed into actions or products which in turn are directed at the environment. The inter-agency organization attempts to complement the activities of individual agencies by facilitating co-operation, co-ordination and communication between those with similar environmental needs and objectives.

Inter-agency organizations are very common in communities and cities where there are a number of social service providers. There are likely to be many occasions for those employed in similar vocations by similar agencies, to recognize the potential benefits of regular communication. This in turn provides an opportunity for agencies to become more intimately aware of the domains of their counterparts and explain their own. In this manner the greater social goal of eliminating waste and maximizing productivity, particularly in government funded services, is addressed. There may be other more subtle pressures on social serving agencies to co-operate as a result of their humanistically oriented training and day-to-day activities. These insinuate a more lateral or horizontal style of power relationships between individuals and therefore the same style is perhaps to be expected between agencies. This style is certainly a critical requirement to the development of an enduring inter-agency organization.

The Red Deer Community Services Network is an example of a current and a successful interagency organization. It is the latest of three such efforts in Red Deer in the last 26 years and, relative to the earlier two, still in its adolescence. The previous undertakings of this type endured for 10 and 5 years respectively before expiring.

The emergence of the Network as a viable organization is the result of some deliberate planning on the part of several key individuals. These people, recognizing the opportunities an inter-agency group could provide, and having experienced the failure of some efforts, proceeded to analyze the reasons for failure and plan an alternative course of action. This alternative consisted of selling the concept of co-operation by providing low cost, high-quality training events for potential members. The event was to be the carrot which attracted people with similar needs and service orientations. It was a tangible benefit which demonstrated the benefits of joint planning; benefits which included economies from sharing resources, and quality, which came from capitalizing on the specialized knowledge contacts and technical expertise of individuals. The other benefit, which was to have the long term consequence of promoting continued co-operation, was to facilitate an atmosphere of open communication at such events. It was felt that if individuals from different agencies attracted by a professional training opportunity were brought together on several occasions, they would begin to recognize the merit of ongoing communication with one another. This strategy appears to have been an effective one as the organization did develop as a formal, unique, entity with many of the same people who attended the events as original members.

With the passage of time, most of the originators of the concept had left the organization. The leadership need of the organization was filled by others who retained a commitment to the concept of delivering tangible benefits to members and the community at large. The activities, however, began to take on an additional meaningfulness in the development of the organization as a whole. While the events themselves continued to play an important function by virtue of their outputs, their planning and delivery also provided the opportunity for participation, involvement and the expression of individual interests by members. In addition to two standing committees, there were planning committees established on an ad hoc basis for each event. This structure contributed to a large amount of personal contact between members as they participated in one or more of the committees, which in turn facilitated the enrichment of professional relationships between individuals.

The effectiveness of any organization is dependent upon the emergence of a form of culture to provide meaning and integrity. According to the ratings of 25 of the participants in the Network, there is a favourable level of culture evident on 10 different factors. Although there was a positive rating on the Network's development of these cultural characteristics, some scored significantly better than others with, not surprisingly, Activities and Feedback scoring the highest. There were, however, some outcomes which suggest that the Network is not as close to the optimal as it could be when it comes to its sense of Identity and its Purpose and Goals. The implications of this for the organization as a whole and its relationship to the community development process are examined in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter concludes the discussion on the Red Deer Community Services Network based upon the results that have emerged from the case study. This discussion evaluates the Network's organizational attributes in the general context of an integrated conception of the community development process and organizational culture as developed in Chapters 2 and 3. This discussion is further elaborated by consideration of the unique nature of inter-agency organizations, and with the drawing of several conclusions, prognostications, and recommendations relative to the ongoing development of the Network. Finally, the thesis is closed with a brief review of the value and potential contribution of organizational theory to the improvement of theory of the community development process.

The Red Deer Community Services Network

According to the opinion obtained from participants and from observation, the Network possesses, in healthy measure, the qualities of a vibrant organization. Although some of these qualities are stronger than others, the weakest do not threaten the overall integrity of the organization in the immediate future.

The Network has carved out for itself an environmental role which is ultimately very difficult to maintain, despite its organizational fortitude. As an agency which attempts to satisfy the needs of its individual members, it must deal with the reality that each member in this case is a corporate member with complex organizational demands and needs of its own. In order for the Network to survive, it must continue to meet member expectations and in doing so develop its own unique place in the complex environment by integrating its internal character and responsiveness. In other words, the Network's organizational culture must equip it to meet environmental (external) demands and organizational (internal) operational demands. The effect of organizational entropy, the natural tendency toward disorganization, is magnified for an inter-agency group whose underlying purpose is to promote unity, co-operation and co-ordination among agencies with diverse and sometimes competitive interests. This was discussed in detail in the section on coordination, co-operation and inter-agency dynamics.

In order to sustain itself as an organization in the pursuit of long-term unifying objectives, the Network has been forced into some unique contradictions. First it promotes obscurity in its identity. With the unspoken provision of not becoming as important as any of its individual members, the Network encounters identity problems of its own. The desire to remain non-threatening in terms of its authority and power restricts its ability to define its role and emerge as the primary environmental official in a particular arena. The Network's efforts to respect the territorial inclinations of its members leaves no room for it to carve out its own piece of the turf. Thus, the obscurity and vagueness of membership criteria, expectations upon members and the clear definition of purpose and goals is inhibited. In the long term, however, the survival of organizational culture demands attention to these needs.

Related to this obscurity of the organizational boundaries is the recognition of the need and inevitability of the Network's role as instrument serving the corporate needs of individual members. Without the internal resources to meet the specialty needs of its own, boundary spanning for example, agencies participate in the Network to economize. In agencies which are small and emphasize service delivery, the boundary spanning role must be filled by manager/generalists whenever the opportunity presents itself. While this role is one where the Network successfully has met its objective, it could suffer internally in the long term from the limited investment of some individual members whose participation is based on selfish objectives.

The Network has attempted to build in safeguards against the consumption of its own resources for individual purposes by putting emphasis upon the planning and delivery of membership serving activities. The planning and organization of such activities have become to a large degree the means by which members achieve their individual goals for communication and networking. There are not specially planned, routine and overt mechanisms used by the Network to accomplish co-ordination and co-operation among members. Instead, with an emphasis upon specific, functionally oriented activities, members are forced into regular meaningful contact with one another.

There are some inherent dangers in this method. There is some risk that, without predefined objectives, the activities themselves will overshadow the organization, losing the principles of participation and involvement amidst the need for success. The other risk is that the activities may begin to fail or be less successful with the result of dampening enthusiasm for the organization. In a more fully integrated organization, resources may be available to recognize the sources and deal with failure, whereas failure in this case may be attributed to more fundamental organizational weaknesses.

In fact, the Red Deer Community Services Network has met with poor results in some of their activities and even had to cancel a couple. However, a continued positive view of this particular aspect of the organization implies satisfaction with the process, in particular the planning and feedback mechanisms.

The other major strength to the Network's approach to planning and delivery of activities lies with the diversity and wide appeal of most of its projects. This variety has led to an opportunity for most participants to have been involved out of personal interest instead of an obligation, a much more successful means of sustaining participation.

The issue of leadership is also important to an understanding of the organization's development. Although participants rated the decision-making and involvement opportunities highly, there is little doubt that the Network has relied upon the efforts of several key individuals to provide continuity. This is especially obvious in light of the general absence of clearly defined purpose and goals. Although there is an obvious commitment to democratic decision-making and to active involvement from all members, there is inevitably an extraordinary level of passion among some individuals for the concept or purpose of the Network. The original and most persistent of this has come primarily from two sources. First has been the influence and direct leadership of Family and Community Support Services which has both the mandate, under provincial legislation, and the resources, in terms of manpower and finances, to be involved in co-ordination activities. The second source of leadership has come from the Red Deer AID Service (Advice Information and Direction) which, because of its referral orientation, has regular contact with many different agencies. These two organizations were represented among the four founding members of the Network and although the leadership has undergone a transition since the beginning of 1986, FCSS and AID continue to be prominant members of the Network. Throughout the organization's history, the leadership of several key people has provided continuity, a consistent commitment to participatory involvement and a shared workload. This is, however, a potentially hazardous arrangement of power in the organization. Without clearly defined purpose, goals, objectives and strategies and an organizational commitment to the principles of participation, there could be risk of abuse. If a leader were to emerge on the basis of a strong and eloquent will, there is a risk that power and authority would emerge in a concentrated and threatening manner. As discussed earlier, the Network relies upon a non-threatening, relatively obscure power base to sustain its support from individual agencies. The embodiment of power and authority in a single or small group of persons would quickly erode the foundation of the Network as members escape the influence of yet another competitor for environmental resources, and over whom there is reduced membership control.

The need for organizational integrity cannot then be substituted with strong leadership in the long term. The Network must recognize its need to develop internal mechanisms by which organizational purpose and goals are developed, evaluated and enforced. It, like any social system, wages a constant battle against entropic disorganizing forces and must encourage the growth of organizational culture as a counter-entropic force.

Future Growth and Development - A Systems View

In keeping with the process or systems orientation of this thesis, it is possible to consider the future of the Network as an organizational entity. The Network attempts to act as a device for co-ordination and integration in the community services environment. As an organization it absorbs and stores inputs from the environment which it converts to outputs. It also, as an organization, needs to consume inputs to sustain its involvement in an internal systemic process.

The internal systemic process operant in any organization implies a state of dynamic movement. If an organization becomes static and fails to absorb environmental inputs, it will succumb to entropy and dissolve. There appears to be little risk of this to the Red Deer Community Services Network as the organization continues to be involved in a variety of boundary spanning activities. There is an ongoing process of definition, planning, delivery evaluation and feedback, which would seem to assure continued existence. The Network, in this way, continues to fulfill certain environmental needs.

There is some question as to whether the need in the environment that the Network is filling is that for co-ordination and integration. While it is quite successful at co-ordinating the various functions, tasks and roles in meeting its own organizational needs, there is no evidence to suggest that it is acting in such an instrumental fashion for the broader environment. And, while there is an indication from members that the organization is achieving a degree of integration through shared norms and values (culture) there is no evidence to suggest that is promoting the same conditions in the broader environment. In order for the Network to play such a role, it would require the endorsement of a mandate to that effect from other environmental entities. This has not been the case.

Although there have been several efforts at environmental or community-wide co-ordination among service groups, there has been no obvious articulation of what this really means. If the Network has contributed to greater co-ordination and integration in this environment, it has done so as a result of informal internal processes or as a byproduct of its activities. To identify environmental co-ordination as a purpose for an inter-agency organization is unrealistic both in terms of concept and in terms of resources. The environment as a system is much too complex to co-ordinate or integrate with the inconsistent investment of resources and commitments from voluntary participants. The best that the inter-agency organization can hope to achieve is co-ordination and integration within its own system.

Organization and the Community Development Process

The definition of the community development process found earlier in this thesis provides a basis for its conception as having the prerequisite characteristic of organization among the people utilizing it as a means of environmental change. This definition deliberately precludes the inference that the change sought by the organization could be judged positively or negatively, only that the change is one they sought collectively. In fact, by definition community development historically and in its world-wide application, challenged the status quo - be that good or bad. Therefore, this thesis is based on an understanding of community development which recognizes that the inherent good of the process comes from the internal organizational change which occurs as a result of:

1. a commitment to an organizational process resulting in collectively directed activities, and

2. an environmental change as a result of the activities.

While the second benefit cannot always be guaranteed, the first, if the principles of the process are adopted, can have a positive impact for participants despite the risk of failure in achieving significant environmental change. It is this first aspect of the process which has received emphasis here. The need for internal organizational integration demands attention by the community development process in the quest for change of greater magnitude in the economic, social or political mileau.

This organizational integration can be understood as a form of culture emerging in the group. Culture gives a community the systemic fortitude and strength required to respond to the dynamic state of the relationship to the environment. Changes and fluctuations in the environment are inevitable, as they are in the organization and the development of culture allows for the successful articulation of these changes. There are systemic responses developed which make molehills out of mountains by providing a cultural interpretation of the changes, an interpretation which is coherent to organizational participants.

This is not to suggest, however, that the organization exists only to sustain itself. The development in community development refers to both the emergence of culture in the organization and to change in the environment. The extent to which environmental change is realized depends largely upon how success is defined, which in turn stems from the definition of clear purpose and goals. Development as process defined activity implies change; change which is directed by a predefined objective and is evaluated against this expectation. The organization's cultural attributes must ensure that the process of purpose, objective, activity, evaluation and feedback provides guidance to development. Community development is a technique of change which is utilized in various scales in a variety of social conditions. Although the degree of sophistication, formality and structure may vary greatly between them, these organizational qualities are necessary for the accomplishment of change.

Failure to recognize the requirement for organizational development subjects the group to entropic pressures with which it cannot realistically cope. Entropy as a natural process of death through disorganization (be it cells in an organism or people in a group) can be countered with proper regard for the health of the organism (or organization). There are undoubtedly those who feel that it, is improper to place extra-ordinary emphasis on this aspect of the community development process because of the risk of an inappropriate prolonging of the group's existence beyond its original purpose. While this may be a problem in reality, it should not be theoretically, because an organization should reach an awareness, through evaluation and feedback, of having succeeded in its purpose (or not being able to succeed) and dissolving itself.

The greater risk of failing to recognize the importance of the organization's culture in development is that of reducing the process to one of anarchy and/or tyranny. Disorder is a reflection of the inability of the culture to adequately contend with the pressures of entropy and ultimately is destructive to the purpose of the organization. While there may be some hope that out of the disorder will emerge the opportunity for improvement or restructuring it is ultimately the end of organized action and marks the place of starting over.

The other risk of failing to promote cultural strength in an organization is that weakness creates a vacuum in which concentrated leadership can develop. This allows individuals or small subgroups to take control over the purpose and activities of the group without being directly accountable. While this may not be necessarily bad and accountability may be being tacitly applied, the consequences again are ultimately fatal for the organization as a mechanism for community development. It becomes in fact a host for sometimes subtle, sometimes obvious, tyranny.

Conclusions

The case study of the Red Deer Community Services Network has illustrated an analysis of the organization, its culture and development. These are ingredients which, with some exceptions, are not typically emphasized in attempting to understand the community development process.

Both systems theory and organizational theory are valuable in comprehending the foundations and context of communities and their role in affecting change. Systems theory forces an analysis of the whole situation, the organization, its environment and the dynamics of intra system and inter system relationships. Organizational theory, which is integrally linked to open systems theory, provides an opportunity to examine various qualities of groups as they relate to the planning and staging of activities. It also introduces the concept of organizational culture, which is an appropriate and useful synthesis of various organizational attributes. It is a micro scale application of theories and explanations used to describe society-wide culture.

The Red Deer Community Services is an organization which is both a product of and utilizes the community development process. It meets the systems definition developed earlier in this thesis in that it:

1. sustains the ongoing characteristics of internal organizations,
2. operates on the basis of a shared need for co-operation and co-ordination,
3. uses an integrated participatory planning process for the development of activities.
4. accesses the resources provided by members and elsewhere in the environment to generate activities which are intended to change the environment (by facilitating co-operation and adding to individual competence).

Although the case study has focused upon the first of these four elements of the definition, the others have also been addressed because, in the true sense of process and systems, they are integrally linked. On the basis of the information generated by the case study the Network can be considered to be successfully defined as a community development agent. In particular, the case study has identified specific areas which influence its ability to sustain the process.

Using ten different aspects or measures of organizational quality, it was determined that the Red Deer Community Services Network is developing cultural strength, although there is reason to be concerned about two important areas in particular. The Network needs to address its identity. There is some confusion among participants as to the boundaries of the organization and where an individual stands relative to these. Although a process of clarification would be impaired by the group's inter-agency nature and the implicit desire for a degree of vagueness, identity and boundaries need to be more clearly defined.

The other area requiring attention is the critical one of purpose and goals. Although these were articulated earlier in the organization's history, passing time and attrition in the leadership have resulted in their confusion. It is thought that most members have some confidence that their assumptions about the general purpose is sound, based on their understanding of the traditional role of inter-agency groups and on their experience with the group's activities. While this may be adequate, it is not optimal and an organization wide process of defining the purpose and specific goals would contribute to a solidification of the group's foundation.

The overall positive results on the other cultural qualities, suggests that the organization can address these issues successfully. It is very important for inter-agency organizations in particular, to maintain a strong cultural foundation. There are extra-ordinary entropic pressures on a group which attempts to continuously satisfy the diverse interests and demands of members which are independent entities in the same general environment.

The problem with identity and purpose that was identified in the Network is not uncommon in community organizations and activities. The community development process often neglects these important aspects of organization on the basis of the democratic attitude of not wanting to be seen excluding anybody or in not narrowing the frame of reference to the degree that participation is inhibited. This neglectful approach limits effectiveness in the long-term and tarnishes the image of the community development process overall. Participants can be frustrated by the incompleteness of the process leading to diminished commitment. Observers and other environmental entities come to view the process and the organization with suspicion and caution.

People who employ the community development process would be well served by being more aware of the organizational needs and qualities of the groups with which they work. Increased emphasis on developing internally will improve success on effecting meaningful change in the environment.

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APPENDIX I

RED DEER COMMUNITY SERVICES NETWORK

QUESTIONNAIRE

RED DEER COMMUNITY SERVICES NETWORK

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long have you been attending Network meetings?

    1) Less than 3 months.

    2. 3 to 6 months.

    3) 7. to 12 months.

    4) more than 12 months.

2. To what extent have you been involved in the Network?

    1) Attend meetings only.

    2) Have attended Network sponsored events.

    3) Have actively participated in planning and organization of Network activities.

3. Are you the chief executive of your organization or agency? (eg. director, board chairman)

    1) Yes.

    2) No.

Would you please rate, in your own opinion, the Red Deer Community Services Network according to: (Please circle the choice that best estimates your beliefs)

1. COMMUNICATION:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Poor internval communication. Few opportunities.			Average			Well developed communication between and among Participants.

2. IDENTITY:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Boundary between who is in the Network and who is not very unclear, or not present.						Organizational boundaries clear. Easy to tell who is a part of Network and who is not.

3. LEADERSHIP:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Group needs for leadership unmet or too concentrated.						Leadership needs met and evenly distributed.

4. COHESION:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Members distrustful and non-sharing. Atmosphere						Optimal cohesion feelings of trust Respect & Friendliness.

5. UNIQUENESS AND MEANING:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
No sense of meaning or group spirit.						Group unique and meaningful. Spirit obvious and shared.

6. DECISION-MAKING:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Group indecisive decisions made by few, no opportunities for share in decisions.						Consensus sought and tested, high degree of participation in decision-making process.

7. PURPOSE AND GOALS:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Confused, diverse conflicting, unclear.						Clear to all, shared and accepted organizational activities are consistent with goals.

8. ACTIVITIES:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Ineffective, unrelated to goals, not						Effective, Goal-related, meaningful.

9. FEEDBACK:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
No means of receiving feedback on group functioning or activities. Feedback not integrated into subsequent decisions.						Feedback facilitated or integrated.

10. CREATIVITY AND GROWTH:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Members and group in a rut; operate routinely persons stereotyped and rigid in their roles, no progress.						Group flexible seeks new and better ways; individuals changing and growing; creative individually supported.

APPENDIX II

RED DEER COMMUNITY SERVICES NETWORK

SOURCE DOCUMENTS

- FUNDING PROPOSAL
  - RECOMMENDATIONS BY SUBCOMMITTEE
  - ON STRUCTURE.

FCSS FUNDING PROPOSAL

1. Project Name: Red Deer Community Services Network

2. History: Interagency organizations have a long history in Red Deer. It is apparent that informal meetings have taken place for at least twenty five years and the development of such important community services as the Family Service Bureau Counselling program are a result of early interagency efforts.

   Unfortunately, interagency groups have also had a history of early dissolution. The present network was most conscious of this risk and deliberately planned its events and programs so that members could realize tangible benefits from their on-going participation. The Network was created in late 1982 under the leadership of the John Howard Society, Red Deer AID Service, FCSS Department, Alberta Social Services Consultation Unit, and the Status of Women. This cover group applied for, and received funding from FCSS and the United Way to deliver four workshops in 1983. The workshops were instrumental in attracting new members to the Network and the unqualified success of the program has led to its continuation —four more workshops will have been completed by the end of 1984. The same funders have been involved.

   The FCSS Special Projects Funding Committee informed the Network this year that continued funding could not be provided within the terms of their program and we were encouraged to apply for regular funding. In light of our stability over the past two years and a new, more formalized structure; and in light of our growing membership and obvious success with programs; we are intending to even further expand our role and our profile within the community.

3. Need: The history of interagency groups within our community amply substantiates their need. Historical lack of success seems to lie with the fact that they remained informal and more importantly that they were not active in programming or projects. The success of Network workshops and the excellent attendance at meetings throughout the past two years, substantiates that a community need is clearly being met. The Network clearly assumes many of the responsibilities that might have fallen to a Red Deer Social Planning Council and while the Network does not suppose to substantiate for a Social Planning Council it does fulfill a crucial community function.

   Community Services Network activity can be deemed preventive in at least two respects:

   1) As a regularly scheduled forum, it provides opportunity for individual agencies to keep abreast of community development, thereby enabling members to anticipate problems and be prepared to meet them.

2) Professional development workshops are presented to both volunteering and paid staff of organizations--this education function benefits clients of all the agencies who participate.

4. Goals and Objectives:

1. To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information relevant to the community.

2. To enhance relationships between agencies who might not otherwise meet.

3. To organize professional development opportunities to meet the needs of the community locally (presently these are available only outside of Red Deer).

4. To organize and present a major conference in Red Deer. Besides establishing a theme relevant to the entire community, it would serve by its preparation, to link member agencies and identify the community Services Network.

5. Delivery Model/Staffing: Monthly meetings are held during which time presentations of common interest are made, community needs are discussed, and committees are established to develop tangible projects to meet the expressed needs.

Executive officers have been elected by the participants in the Network and all activity is conducted on a voluntary basis.

6. Evaluation: All workshops have been (and will be) evaluated individually. These, with the conference, will provide the major indicators of success or failure of the Community Services Network. On-going participation and attendance of member agencies will also be a factor in determining whether we are successfully meeting a community need.

7. 1985 Spring Conference: The conference accounts for a large part of our 1985 operating budget.

It is proposed that a well planned, high profile and rewarding special event in the form of a Central Alberta interagency conference could be highly successful. The purposes of such a conference are:

1. To provide the opportunity for local agency personnel (staff and volunteer) who are constrained by budget and time to:

   a) be exposed to high quality educational opportunities delivered by leaders in specialty fields

   b) regenerate their enthusiasm and commitment

   c) come together in a common location (with the byproduct of sharing and enhanced interagency communication)

2. To economize by having well qualified speakers and educators come to Red Deer.
3. To raise the profile of the Network both within the service community and in the public eye.

We feel that in order to achieve these goals it is critical to bring in speakers with national or even international credibility. Many individuals who work on the front lines of agencies or who volunteer their time never have the opportunity to attend events of this nature and caliber. Quality obviously has a high price tag and, although we have been financially successful with our workshops, we feel that FCSS help will be necessary if the cost is to be kept within reach of most agencies.

RED DEER COMMUNITY SERVICES NETWORK
Proposed 1985 Operating Budget

EXPENSES

Copying and Postage		
12 mailings @ 50 ea x .32 =	$192	
3 pages x 50 copies x 20 occasions x $.11 each =	330	520
Printing brochures, flyers, posters, etc.		800
Room rentals (10 meetings @$10 ea)		100
Workshop expenses		
Room rental	$150	
Supplies (coffee, etc.)	50	
Speakers fees	1,000	1,200
Conference expenses		
Room rentals	500	
Speakers fees	3,000	
Promotions & advertising	700	
Printing	500	4,700
		$7,320

REVENUE

Membership 30 @$10 ea	300
Workshops 120 @$10 ea	1,200
Conference fees 100 @$20 ea	2,000
Conference sponsorships	500
	$4,000
DEFICIT	$3,320

COMMUNITY SERVICES NETWORK

In the past year these agencies have been involved in the Community Services Network:

John Howard Soceity
CARE Immigrant center
Red Deer AID Service
Family and Community Support Services
Youth and Volunteer center
United Way
Block Parents
Community Relations, ASSCH
Red Cross
Girl Guides
Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre
Consultation Unit ASSCH
Canadian Mental Health Association
Unemployment Action Center
Boy Scouts
Salvation Army
Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter
Catholic Social Services
Michener Center
Community Corrections
Family Service Bureau

Many other community organizations and agencies have attended the workshops sponsored by the Community Services Network.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO INTERAGENCY COUNCIL

1. Establish a more structured organization by:

   a) Electing an executive (i.e. chairperson, secretary/treasurer, vice-chairperson) for one year terms each at the June meeting.

   b) Appointing standing committees on egs. programs, volunteers, newsletter, planning. Plan and propose relevant events policies etc. for adoption by Council.

   c) Having regular meetings (probably six per year with two additional membership events. Stay with the 2nd Wednesday of the month at noon.

2. Establish a consistent location for meetings eg. library or other.

3. Charge a membership fee which would entitle members to voting privileges, priority enrollments in programs and reduced fees for events.

4. Establish an annual budget for operation of Council including programs (major responsibility for this falls to program and planning committees in conjunction with the executive).

5. Members should be an established organization which serves the public in some way and be non-profit.

6. Each member, organization, or agency shall have one vote.

7. A quorum shall be a member of the executive and six members-at-large.

8. That the general purpose of the Interagency Council remain that of providing tangible benefits to its members in the form of education, communication and shared resources.

9. That the planning committee be established immediately to develop concrete goals and objectives for both the immediate and long term.

10. That in order to establish autonomy and uniqueness we change the name of our organization to the

    Community Resource Council

APPENDIX III

SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF

RED DEER AND DISTRICT

- PURPOSES AND OBJECTS
- BYLAWS
- AGENDA - FINAL MEETING.

SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF RED DEER AND DISTRICT

PURPOSES AND OBJECTS:

The primary purposes and objects of the Council shall be to research into, plan and develop proposals to fulfill the existing and future social needs of the citizens of Red Deer and District to contribute to their general well-being. The Council shall be independent in these objects but shall co-operate with interested individuals, organizations, agencies and governmental departments in attaining and maintaining the highest possible standards of community services.

To this end, the Council shall, to the extent of its ability and resources, attempt:

(1) To promote the establishment and development of community services.

(2) To provide a vehicle and nucleus facilitating coordination and co-operation among social agencies.

(3) To research and evaluate social problems and resources with emphasis on planning for improved social services on all levels.

(4) To gather and disseminate information of social problems and needs

  (a) to promote public awareness and understanding of them,
  (b) to make available to social agencies such information.

(5) To recruit suitable and capable individuals, both professional and voluntary to ensure leadership and personnel essential to the attainment of these objectives.

(6) To carry on such other activities in relation to the foregoing as may be deemed advisable.

NEWS RELEASE

January, 1966.

THE SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF RED DEER AND DISTRICT

The Social Planning Council of Red Deer and District are holding a general meeting on January 31st, 1966 at the South School Auditorium, 4418 - 48 Avenue. Mr. G. A. Eyford, Assistant Director, Department of Extension, University of Alberta, will be the guest speaker.

The constitution of the Social Planning Council will be presented and discussed, which if adopted, will enable the Social Planning Council to carry out the following objectives:

(1) To promote the establishment and development of community services.

(2) To provide a vehicle and nucleus facilitating coordination and co-operation among social agencies.

(3) To research and evaluate social problems and resources with emphasis on planning for improved social services on all levels.

(4) To gather and disseminate information of social problems and needs,
  (a) to promote public awareness and understanding of them,
  (b) to make available to social agencies such information.

(5) To recruit suitable and capable individuals, both professional and voluntary to ensure leadership and personnel essential to the attainment of these objectives.

(6) To carry on such other activities in relation to the foregoing as may be deemed advisable.

The function of the Social Planning Council of Red Deer and District is to promote understanding of community needs, to evaluate social needs in the community and to plan how these needs can best be met. The Council will bring together representatives from public and private organizations in the field of health, welfare, education and recreation to study and apply their combined experience to attain and maintain the highest possible standards of community services.

There is no fee for membership in the Social Planning Council and any individual, organization or group who wishes to attend the General Meeting of the Council is cordially invited.

The Social Planning Council of Red Deer and District will replace the Red Deer Community Welfare Group, which was responsible for several projects including the establishment of the Community Clothing Bank, the Family Service Bureau, the Christmas Bureau, the Directory of community Services and studies of social problems such as "Effective Social Welfare Services at a Local Level" and "Adoption in Alberta".

At the present time the Social Planning Council are studying preventive welfare services required in this area and are preparing a brief to recommend the structure that will provide the most effective method of planning and implementing preventive services.

The Planning Council are also sponsoring the play, "A Man for All Seasons" to be presented in the Memorial Centre at 8:15 p.m., January 29th. The proceeds will go to the Family Service Bureau, which badly needs additional funds to provide a full-time counselling service.

Members of the Board of Directors of the Social Planning Council are: Dr. E. V. Dolinsky, President; Rev. T. J. kroetch, Vice-President; Mr. W. D. C. de Balinhard, Treasurer; Mr. W. H. Irvine, Secretary; Mr. V. Barry, Mrs. K. L. Ford, Alderman Mrs. L. H. Taylor, Mrs. P. Sherwin, Mr. C. D. Cousineau, Mr. D. Hepburn, Mr. L. Hewson, Mr. W. H. Mabb, Mr. D. Moore, Mr. R. Ousta.

Respectfully submitted,
SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF RED DEER
AND DISTRICT.

(signed) W. H. Irvine
W. H. Irvine,
Secretary

THE SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF RED DEER AND DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

September 26, 1966.

THE SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL PLANS AND CO-ORDINATES SERVICES

Sound, meaningful service to people, services that change and grow as the community changes and grows, must be researched, planned and co-ordinated if they are to keep abreast with individual, family and community needs. This is the momentous task for the Social Planning Council of Red Deer and District.

This worthy organization includes some 24 member agencies and several individual members who are concerned with recognition of needs, evaluation of present services and, when necessary, planning and inaugurating new services to meet community needs.

The Council originally dealt primarily with welfare problems, but is gradually broadening its scope to concern in health, education, recreation and employment trends as they affect the social well-being of community members. They are vitally interested in any service that will enrich family life and enhance individual potential.

The Council began in 1960 when a small group of interested individuals concerned themselves with unmet community needs. They were then known as the Red Deer community Welfare Group, and from 1960 to 1965 undertook studies, prepared briefs, expressed concern about what was happening in our community and gradually had several new services established, including the Red Deer Family Service Bureau, the Community Clothing Bank and the Christmas Bureau.

By 1965 Red Deer and District were ready for a full-fledged Social Planning Council. In the spring of 1965 a public meeting was called with representation from 46 public and private agencies from all the fields of service. At this meeting the Social Planning council came into being.

The Council attempts to have a full working knowledge of all agency service presently offered in this area, and an understanding of unmet community needs. The research and planning services of the Council are open to any agency or individual who requires them. When a project is to be researched, volunteer citizens who are vitally interested in that particular field are involved at committee level, and several dozen volunteers are presently quietly working for our community and carrying out this important function. Present committees of research include The Preventive Social Service Study Committee, the Volunteer Bureau Committee, and Family Counsellors and Family Life Education Committee. As these committees complete their work the community will be enhanced by their researched recommendations.

The work load has now increased to where it is necessary to hire a Social Planner with a broad knowledge of the Social Service field. This step is of primary importance in the Preventive Social Service field because of the new service requirements that must be introduced at each municipality level, such as Home Call and Day Call Programs. The planner can give leadership and assistance to the vast planning task required for our area.

Present Board members of the Council are:

Dr. E. V. Dolinsky, President
Rev. Thomas J. Kroetch, Vice-President
Mr. W. D. C. deBalinhard, Treasurer
Mr. W. Harland Irvine, Secretary
Mr. C. D. Cousineau
Mr. Robert W. Cundy
Mr. James Foster
Mr. Donald W. Hepburn
Mr. Les Hewson
Mrs. W. H. (Celia) Love
Mr. Warren H. Mabb
Mr. Donald Moore
Mrs. L. H. (Ethel) Taylor

If all services are to serve the people with the best possible co-ordination between agencies, and in the most up to date methods, a strong, vital Social Planning Council is of prime importance.

Respectfully submitted
SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF RED DEER
& DISTRICT

W. H. Irvine,
Secretary

SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF RED DEER AND DISTRICT

Notice of Annual Meeting and the Order of Business

ANNUAL MEETING: Thursday, May 18th, 1972

The Snell Gallery, Red Deer Public Library

8:00 o'clock evening

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Call to Order and Welcome: President, Mr. Don Hepburn

Committee Reports of chairman or alternates:

1. Christmas Bureau
2. Committee on Aging.
3. Family Life Education
4. Others

Financial Statement

Report of Special Commitee of Four

Report of the President

Election of Officers

New Business

Adjournment:

RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE OF FOUR:

"That, since it is felt that a Committee of Four would be a workable number to carry on the work of the Social Planning Council of Red Deer and District; to study, co-ordinate and research social needs in the Community, in consultation with resource persons, to disseminate information to the public, and to stimulate action and programs to answer such social needs; it is hereby recommended that the Social Planning Council of Red Deer & District appoint a Committee of Four and charge them with the responsibilities as outlined above; that this Committee be Mrs. J. Goin, Mrs. A. Hill, Mr. G. Graham and ...., and that the Secretary of the Council be assigned to the Committee as an ex-officio member. Or to do otherwise as the Social Planning Council, in its wisdom, deems best."

APPENDIX IV

INTER-AGENCY FORUM

- NOTICE TO MEMBERSHIP
- RESULTS OF QUESTIONAIRE

INTERAGENCY FORUM

COMMENTS:

1. The Forum is not a formal organization. It exists at the will of those who attend. It is neither a Board of Directors nor a committee.

   The purpose of the Forum is to bring together agency staff and provide an informal setting that will promote person-to-person and agency-to-agency communication.

   For those who are seeking greater formality and sophistication, I suggest that you are looking in the wrong place. The Forum is not a proper vehicle for problem-solving, staff training, labor management disputes, or general axe-grinding. It brings us together. Action is your responsibility.

2. Some kind of program is the essential excuse for meeting. Bear in mind that "great" programs are scarce because of their subjective nature. What bores you to tears may be right on for someone else. Be tolerant. Your turn will come.

3. Your Executive Committee is serving on a volunteer basis. They have no authority— only a mandate to:

   a) call meetings
   b) provide a program (when possible)
   c) send a meeting report to all participating agencies (with the help of Preventive Social Services).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Start on time - end on time. 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. is sufficient.

2. The following should be regular agenda items:

   a) introduction of new staff people
   b) farewell to departing staff people
   c) new policies adopted by agencies
   d) new programs initiated by agencies.

3. The generation of program ideas should remain everyone's responsibility. Don't leave it to the Executive Committee. They are just as busy as you are. If you have a suggestion, be prepared to take part of the responsibility in setting it up.

Dick Carr, Interim Chairman

A. INTERAGENCY NEWS BULLETIN SUMMER '74

1. Is it of value to you? Yes 36 ; No 4

   a) Very much so
   b) Tremendous help
   c) Partly, or sometimes
   d) Definitely most informative and helpful
   e) Limited value.

2. Would you like to see more of these editions? Yes 33 No 6

   a) Keep up-to-date re: staff, etc.
   b) Very time consuming.

3. How often do you feel they should be published? Not at all 3
   Once a year 12 ; Twice a year 19 .

   a) To bring us up-to-date on changes or new programs.
   b) At least once a year— more often and shorter news bulletin may also help.
   c) (Twice a year) if possible due to staff changes.

B. CONTENTS OF MEETINGS

1. What would you like to see take place?

   a) Speakers 20

      i) Who can speak but also who knows how to involve others. I don't lean easily by listening. I learn better when I am experiencing
      ii) Occasionally

   b) Agency presentations 19

      i) Minimal
      ii) Particularly when significant changes in policy or services are made
      iii) Rotating

   c) Local issues 21 ; Suggestions welcome:

      i) Ample time for exchange - person to person level for those attending
      ii) Coordination of services and case conference idea - innovative ideas on how to really help people and also help and support each other—more input on new methods and more educational content

iii) Possibly one person from each agency could be responsible for advising Forum of any changes; also this person might serve as a catalyst in creating agency interest in the Forum.
iv) We might do well to contact persons involved in new or special projects from other communities in an attempt to learn new approaches to doing our various jobs.
v) Any of the above - not the same every time
vi) Continued information of agencies work and areas of co-operation and coordination of services
vii) Agencies might air their specific problem regarding local issues and receive feedback
viii) Re: local issues, people with disciplined knowledge of subject matter, please, i.e. less junk talk and more preparation on part of speakers
ix) Presentations by agencies of local issues and programs in areas where mutual cooperation is enough of an asset to warrant the time spent.
x) MORE PARTIES!

d) Other:
i) Non-structured meetings where we can truly meet and enrich each other
ii) Futurist presentation on projections-social, demographic, economics, etc., over the next ten (10) years in the Red Deer area, with SPECIFIC suggestions on how this will affect the silent population and funding sources of both public and private agencies
iii) Good films, i.e., Drug and Alcohol Commission have some very valuable films.

C. STRUCTURE OF THE FORUM

Historically (two years) the Interagency Forum has run with a three-person executive committee which has been appointed by the general meeting.

1. Do you feel this is adequate? Yes 28 ; No 0

a) If more than three, might be difficult to get them together.
b) But its been the executive that's been grossly inadequate

2. If not, what other suggestions do you have?

a) Someone needs to take responsibility to call a meeting - when and where, etc. - and have contact people to feed ideas to, but also all the work should not fall on three people. I like the idea of shared responsibility and shared leadership.

b) Let's not let the thing burgeon into a full executive and a full work load

c) Not interested unless meetings begin on time, have an agenda, and are properly chaired. Also, will seldom be able to attend meetings if on Fridays

d) Perhaps greater awareness of who these three people are, more clarity on purpose of Interagency Forum

e) It's not complicated, let it be.

APPENDIX V

QUESTIONAIRE DATA

- FREQUENCIES

TABLE IV-1

LENGTH OF TIME ATTENDED

Less than 3 months	4
3 to 6 months	4
7 to 12 months	3
More than 12 months	14

TABLE IV-2

EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT

Meetings only	6
Attended Events	4
Planning & Organization	15

TABLE IV-3

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF OWN ORGANIZATION

Yes	8
No	17

TABLE IV-4

RATINGS ON COMMUNICATION

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	2
Average	4	4
	5	9
	6	8
Optimal	7	2

Mean = 5.16 Mode = 5

TABLE IV-5

RATINGS ON IDENTITY

Minimal	1	1
	2	2
	3	5
Average	4	5
	5	6
	6	5
Optimal	7	1

Mean = 4.28 Mode = 5

TABLE IV-6

RATINGS ON LEADERSHIP

Minimal	1	0
	2	1
	3	1
Average	4	4
	5	9
	6	7
Optimal	7	3

Mean = 5.16

Mode = 5

TABLE IV-7

RATINGS ON COHESION

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	0
Average	4	2
	5	8
	6	11
Optimal	7	4

Mean = 5.68

Mode = 6

TABLE IV-8

RATINGS ON UNIQUENESS AND MEANING

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	2
Average	4	2
	5	12
	6	6
Minimal	7	3

Mean = 5.24 Mode = 5

TABLE IV-9

RATINGS ON DECISION-MAKING

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	1
Average	4	2
	5	11
	6	8
Optimal	7	3

Mean = 5.40 Mode = 5

TABLE IV-10

RATINGS ON PURPOSE AND GOALS

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	2
Average	4	6
	5	10
	6	6
Optimal	7	1

Mean = 4.92

Mode = 5

TABLE IV-11

RATINGS ON ACTIVITIES

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	0
Average	4	0
	5	5
	6	17
Optimal	7	3

Mean = 5.92 Mode = 6

TABLE IV-12

RATINGS ON FEEDBACK

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	1
Average	4	0
	5	8
	6	13
Optimal	7	3

Mean = 5.68 Mode = 6

TABLE IV-13

RATINGS ON CREATIVITY AND GROWTH

Minimal	1	0
	2	0
	3	0
Average	4	2
	5	8
	6	12
Optimal	7	3

Mean = 5.64 Mode = 6